Truman Nostalgia *Gerald W. Johnson*

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John Osborne on Rocky's Progress

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TRB

from Washington
May 31, 1975

Psychic Slide

A dozen years ago America hadn't a doubt in the world. It walked buoyantly. It only wanted to show other nations how to do half so well. Then things began to crack. Oswald shot the President. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy died. Racial conflict worsened; Vietnam deepened; inflation widened. Lyndon Johnson abdicated; riots hit the 1968 Democratic convention. There was Kent State, Jackson State, civil disobedience, racial riots, invasion of Cambodia, marches on Washington. The Senate rejected two Supreme Court appointees; McGovern tripped on his vice presidential choice; and only 56 percent bothered to vote in the Nixon "landslide." More inflation . . . that just started it.

Americans were almost artlessly self-confident, up to 1963. In that year some 85 percent said they were "proud" of their governmental and political institutions (contrasted to 46 percent in Britain and only 30 percent in Mexico!).

Polls (1964-1970) show the erosion that followed: trust that the federal government does right "most of the time" fell from 62 percent in 1964 to 47 percent in 1970; belief that government is pretty much run "by a few big interests" rose from 29 percent to 49 percent; that officials "don't seem to know what they are doing" from 27 percent to 44 percent. But the public still believed that officials are honest: only 28 percent thought that "quite a lot" were crooked and it was hardly changed in 1970 at 31 percent.

So then, after Spiro Agnew's plea of *nolo contendere* to a crime count in the midst of Watergate, Sen. Muskie's subcommittee on intergovernmental operations in 1973 hired Louis Harris to do a poll, a kind of extension of the earlier surveys that had been made by the Survey Research Center. Harris gave his conclusions and reported, in alarm, "Any objective analysis of such results can only conclude that a crisis of the most serious magnitude now exists in the responses and assessment of the people to their government."

Everybody knew it but it was startling nevertheless. Alienation, the poll said, took many forms. "The rich get richer and the poor get poorer," jumped from 26 percent to 55 percent; 74 percent believed that "special interests get more from government than the people do." Did any institutions get majority support from the public? Yes, medicine, and the local trash collection. To sum it up, a total of 41 percent of those queried felt a change in the form of government was needed, and all of this before Nixon quit and Vietnam collapsed.

President Ford would have an easier time at NATO, and Kissinger with Gromyko at Vienna, if the mood back home were different. Americans are naturally optimists; the degree of present self-doubt is probably historically unique. The media-created flap over the refugees and the knee-jerk jingoistic exultation over the *Mayaguez* affair (followed immediately by self-examination and new doubts) seem expressions of a kind of psychic slide that has developed for a dozen years. It will pass, we have no doubt, before long! But in the meantime, to massage the cynicism, papers report a huge new land fraud in Florida, large-scale political bribery by American-based multinationals in half a dozen countries, and FBI memos (supposedly uncovered by the Rockefeller Commission) supporting charges that the CIA plotted with the Mafia to kill Fidel Castro in 1961.

This long slide in American self-confidence has had profound effects on one governmental institution—Congress. A huge class of freshmen stormed into Washington in 1975, sent by angry voters who wanted a shake-up. In number of new faces it's the largest freshman class since 1949, comprising 26 percent of House Democrats and 12 percent of Republicans. They're young, too, aware of the social changes and the turmoil. We watch them with awe.

Meanwhile, back in 1970 John Gardner set up his Common Cause, which provided a vehicle for popular discontent. It found itself aligned with freshman congressmen. Ralph Nader's organization came too, doing the kind of things that, in other countries, disciplined political parties do. If people distrust government, they are likely to turn to this kind of quasi-political group.

Nearly everybody agrees that a stronger Congress is needed to balance a stronger President. There is no question that Congress has tried to reassert itself and that in the last year or so it has tinkered boldly with a lot of the established mechanisms. These changes are widely referred to as "reforms," though I think it is too early to judge.

The weakness of Congress is simple—it has 435 members and little cohesion. Some kind of discipline is needed if they are going to stand up to the executive, as they should; they need the benefit of responsible political parties, and they need strong leaders. At present there is a vacuum of leadership in Congress, institutional and personal.

Speaker Joe Cannon, "a hard, narrow old Boeotian," was thrown out by a band of insurgents in 1911 led by George Norris, and a kind of feudal system of committee baronies developed. Ultimately a bipartisan coalition of conservatives took over. 'Round about 1958, reapportionment, Southern realignment and erosion of the farm bloc helped establish a national Democratic majority. The engine of change was the liberal Democratic Study Group.

Now Congress is moving into a new phase of its checkered existence, the outlines of which are unclear. There is a sense of urgency, for the freshmen know they are here on probation and that voters back home are angry. The Democratic majority is trying to recapture lost territory, watch the White House, reform its budget, diffuse committees and set up alternative mechanisms of control—which are already tripping over each other. Rarely have things been so fluid.

Weakening the committee structure, without creating alternative authority, may ultimately enhance the President's power. Democrats have revived the caucus—a former paper organization that met only once or twice a year. It is too early to estimate these changes. One thing seems plain; to balance the enlarged presidency the controlling majority of Congress must somehow make a grant of power to somebody who speaks for it—a group or an individual. Maybe it will be to the Speaker, maybe to a steering committee. Neither amiable Sen. Mansfield nor Rep. Albert seems the type to accept the sword or to use it.

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Ethics Gulf

The more we learn about the slickers who manage the world's trade and transportation systems, the more we are reminded of the railroad, steel and banking barons who dominated American business at the turn of the century. The stage is wider now of course. Today deals are struck on a global rather than a city or state level, but the patterns are the same. An ambitious executive may try to buy a President, a cabinet minister or a king—not a mayor. His decisions may affect the tax and unemployment rates of nations, not cities. And he's likely to be chummy with generals, not police chiefs. Seen in this perspective (as James Polk suggested in "Slush," *TNR*, May 17), the illegal corporate contributions made during the year of Watergate were not just an American problem. Rather they were a domestic sampling of the stratagems used by large corporations around the world to evade the laws of the countries where they do business. It is precisely because they are *global* companies that they can manipulate cash outside national jurisdictions and get away with tactics others dare not try. One result of the companies' ability to outwit governments, as Richard Barnet and Ronald Müller point out in their book *Global Reach*, is that the United States is being "latinamericanized." By this the authors mean that important decisions affecting America's economy are being made to an increasing degree not by elected officials but by corporate managers who justify their actions only in terms of profit and loss.

The most recent evidence that political corruption in the US is part of a global rather than a local trend comes from the Securities and Exchange Commission. In reviewing the data collected by the Watergate prosecutors and the Ervin committee, SEC investigators found that the corporations that confessed to making illegal campaign contributions in 1972 had not properly accounted for the use of this money in reports filed with the SEC. Thus, as it later turned out, large handouts to Korean or Central American officials were concealed as part of insurance fees or lumped together with the cost of buying pencils and typewriters under the general category of "operating expenses." The first global corporation hit by the SEC's investigation was United Brands, the food conglomerate and owner of the United Fruit banana empire in Central America. Eli Black, its board chairman, committed suicide early this year. At the time investigators didn't

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know what had driven him to despair. Later, as the SEC investigation progressed, it was discovered that Black had arranged to pay a $1.25-million bribe to the economic minister of Honduras in order to have the banana export tax lowered. The bribe was not accounted for in the company's expense reports filed with the SEC.

The shame that evidently drove Eli Black to kill himself has not touched other executives as deeply. Bob R. Dorsey, the chairman of the board of Gulf Oil, testified before the Senate multinationals subcommittee on May 16 that he approved about five million dollars in illegal contributions to foreign politicians, including four million dollars given to the party of South Korean President Park and $50,000 given to an Arab bank to pay for pro-Arab propaganda in the US. About five million dollars more was spent on domestic politics. Dorsey agreed that "this is a sorrowful chapter in Gulf's long and otherwise productive and constructive history," but he said the money spent in South Korea was given in response to a "demand by high party officials" that "was accompanied by pressure which left little to the imagination as to what would occur if the company would choose to turn its back on the request." Dorsey's admission was prompted by a story two weeks before in *The Wall Street Journal* reporting that the SEC had uncovered Gulf's $10 million slush fund. The SEC and other agencies have also charged Ashland Oil, Phillips Petroleum, the Northrop Corporation, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing and Braniff Airways with deceptive handling of foreign accounts. The extent to which these cases involved political bribery isn't fully known.

After hearing the testimony of Gulf's chairman, the Senate multinationals subcommittee last week called on Messrs. Barnet and Müller, authors of *Global Reach*, to hear what suggestions they might have for ending this sort of transnational chicanery. The goal of multinational companies, Barnet said, is to maximize global profits by taking advantage of cheap labor wherever it can be used, by "skating above national regulation" wherever feasible and by juggling international accounts to minimize tax liabilities in each place of business. The United States is a convenient home nest for many of these corporations because it has a low tax rate for overseas investments. Barnet and Müller agreed that international bribery is a scandal, but they argued that it is really one of the less lucrative tools used by global executives. Legal manipulation of tax accounts is far more profitable.

Asked for a remedy, Barnet and Müller said that international slush funds and other gimmicks of global enterprise can only be kept under control if the industrial countries undertake a joint program of regulation. The challenge of global corporate power, Müller said, is that it poses a dilemma for politicians in countries where the corporations keep their home base. If the United States, for example, attacks the companies singlehandedly, it may make British, Dutch and French corporations more competitive. In the short run this will hurt American businessmen disproportionately. But on the other hand, Müller said, if the United States allows the multinationals to grow more powerful, the domestic economy will continue to experience high inflation and low employment rates for many years. The gap between rich and poor will widen.

The senators were skeptical. "Why should a man be criticized if he's not breaking the law and if he increases the profits and employment of a US-owned company" by giving money to a foreign politician? Sen. Symington wanted to know. He thought that if anyone deserved blame for the existence of international slush funds, Congress did—for having failed to outlaw them. Sen. Church also wondered why the United States should pursue a "squishy" goal of international cooperation when it can attack the problem directly in US-based corporations.

The senators were right. If the problem is as profound as Barnet and Müller say it is, the United States cannot wait for other governments to agree to a joint proposal before starting to clean up international business practices. Most global corporations, after all, are controlled and run by Americans. The surest way to elicit help from abroad would be for the US to act first, and then to invite the Europeans and Japanese to follow. The mechanisms for regulation already exist. Agencies such as the Common Market, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Energy Agency, the International Monetary Fund and others could be asked to develop universal business rules. At the moment, however, the only comprehensive review of global business conduct—aside from the SEC's limited attempt to make real expenditures jibe with reported expenditures—is being handled by John J. McCloy at Gulf Oil headquarters. McCloy is an attorney-lobbyist for all the major oil companies and, incidentally, for United Brands. He has been asked to chair a soul-searching committee at Gulf to find out what went wrong and decide what ought to be done to prevent its happening again. Self-policing by Gulf is not a credible remedy.

The New Nukes

How does the United States cut back its bloated, aging and dangerous NATO stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons at a moment when any reductions in Western Europe, Greece and Turkey—even rational ones—might be pictured by opponents as a sign of post-Vietnam weakness?

One way is to keep it quiet—and that seems to be what's going on with reductions of some weapons in

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Greece and Turkey. Another way is to describe replacement of "unusable" nuclear weapons with "more realistic" conventional ones as a step enabled by technical advancement and resulting in saving money. That apparently is what is being argued as the US begins to substitute new laser-guided conventional bombs for older, tactical nuclear bombs. Finally, cutbacks are being made in the name of security. Some tactical nuclear weapons—artillery and atomic anti-demolition mines in particular—have been stored in isolated places near the borders of Communist countries. There they could be subject to seizure by a Warsaw Pact surprise attack or by terrorists, the latter considered more likely since the guerrillas' Munich raid.

Beginning in the mid-1950s and continuing until 1968, the US built up an overseas NATO-based arsenal of some 7000 tactical nuclear weapons. Stored under American control in various alliance countries were: nuclear bombs (some about 100 times more powerful than the one that demolished Hiroshima); nuclear-tipped medium range missiles (such as the Pershing, with a 400-mile range and a powerful but radioactively dirty 400-kiloton warhead); nuclear anti-demolition mines (that, to be effective against oncoming Communist ground forces, would have to be prepositioned in already constructed, buried chambers—something the West Germans would not permit, so the ADMs are stored in bunkers near the border); nuclear anti-submarine explosives (an aircraft-dropped depth bomb that could do untold damage to sea life, particularly in an enclosed body of water such as the Mediterranean); atomic anti-aircraft missiles (a weapon designed to break up incoming massed bomber groups, something the Soviet air force is not equipped to do); and nuclear eight-inch and 155-millimeter artillery shells (which can only fire eight to 18 miles and thus had to be stationed near a border so they would not land on the home territory of a NATO ally).

Several hundred tactical fighter planes, such as F-4s, stand at the end of runways on 15-minute alert in most NATO countries, loaded with tactical nuclear weapons. Called Quick Reaction Alert aircraft (QRA), they are piloted by both US and NATO country airmen and prevented from being launched by an American guard and knowledge that the nuclear weapon is not operational. That supposedly can only be done after the President of the United States orders the planes to attack and the weapons are activated using a special code known only by US custodial personnel.

At one time QRA aircraft gave visible assurance to America's NATO allies that America was prepared to aid them short of a strategic nuclear exchange. It also provided an allied "finger on the trigger," since NATO pilots along with Americans were involved. Nowadays QRA aircraft look less reassuring. In Greece and Turkey incidents during the Cyprus war and Greek revolutions have led to a decision to "download" the QRA aircraft in those countries. The weapons that once hung unarmed from the alert fighters have been returned to heavily guarded storage areas.

Now a further step is being planned—if it has not already begun. Some nuclear bombs and atomic artillery shells in Greece and Turkey are coming out. For one thing, there are more nuclear bombs there than aircraft to use them. Should a nuclear exchange take place, it is certain that Greece and Turkey-based nuclear-capable aircraft would be among the first targets for Soviet missiles. Airfields in the two countries would also be attacked. There would be no second chance for planes to go back to rearm once their payloads have been discharged.

Recent actions by both Greece and Turkey against US base interests have also motivated the present reconsideration. In Greece, for example, during the last coup US planes and ships were refused permission to land for some time. Before that can happen again, the US wants to take some nuclear weapons out so that removing all our weapons won't be too difficult a job should another crisis arise.

Late last month Sen. John Pastore, chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and no dove, took to the Senate floor to discuss the changing status of tactical nuclear weapons. Using vague language appropriate to the subject, Pastore declared, ". . . without getting into it because this is highly sensitive, we are now presented with a situation where Athens has already announced that we cannot use certain bases in Greece anymore. We had the situation in Turkey with reference to Cyprus, and I am telling the Senate it is about time we turned a new page and began to look a bit more deeply into these commitments we have made. . . ." Pastore then called "for a reduction in the number of nuclear weapons in NATO countries, particularly where the usefulness in the event of war is highly questionable."

Though Pastore and others focused on the political instability of the US nuclear position in Greece and Turkey, they also stressed the newest tactical nuclear weapons worry—fear nuclear warheads might be stolen by terrorists. During his recent floor statement Pastore placed in the *Congressional Record* a declassified version of a report he and Sen. Howard Baker prepared after a 1973 trip to inspect the security of NATO nuclear weapons. The two senators at that time found in one country nuclear weapons were "located in the basement of a building which contains administrative offices." There was no outer perimeter fence as is normally the case for nuclear sites, and a guard at the basement entrance "was posted for the first time, the day the [senators] visited the building."

At another site the senators found the atomic anti-submarine warfare weapons located there were for aircraft stationed at another base. The senators suggested the weapons and planes be located at a single base, and noted their doubts that "the Russians in

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wartime would allow a slow propeller driven US navy aircraft to search out their submarines in the water between [deleted]."

Another nuclear site was thought by the commander in chief of allied forces in southern Europe to have been put under surveillance. The senators were told sentries had fired on an "apparent intruder" and subsequently a US marine unit had been assigned guard duty at that site.

Pastore and Baker did not limit their criticisms to the security problem created by terrorists. They visited nuclear artillery sites where weapons could fire only 10 miles. The senators concluded that they were "particularly vulnerable to surprise attack by Communist forces." In the matter of atomic demolition mines, they found that because no authority existed to dig holes, unacceptable levels of fallout could arise should these weapons be used. They also concluded the mines had been stored in populated areas where they would affect large numbers of people, and "not placed . . . in the sparsely populated areas of [deleted] ideally suited for their use."

In good part because of the 1973 Pastore-Baker report, the Defense Department reduced the number of individual nuclear storage areas by 20 percent and told Pastore in an April 24, 1975 letter of plans to cut another 10 percent next year. As important as the consolidation of storage areas is, however, the decision to get NATO agreement on weapons cutbacks could be still more significant. In a recent report to Congress, Defense Secretary James Schlesinger said the US has called for a more detailed long-term analysis of tactical nuclear weapons "in light of deploying modernized conventional air munitions" such as the new guided bombs. In his earlier posture statement, Schlesinger had said consideration should be given to "replacing the existing stockpiles with nuclear weapons and delivery systems more appropriate to the European environment."

In a posture statement of his own, Gen. George Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, seconded Secretary Schlesinger's approach but with a typical military twist. "As the debate as to utility of theater nuclear weapons continues," said Brown, "ultimate need for such weapons should not be confused with desirability. Our current inventory is becoming obsolete; the issue is not whether we want to use such weapons, but how we replace the deterrent capability that these weapons provide. A failure to replace the capability clearly risks the peace." Brown agreed that neither the size of the nuclear stockpile nor the deployment were "immutable," as long as they retained their deterrent effect.

The military often takes one step back to prepare the way for two steps forward. The Pastore-Baker report set the stage for cutbacks but a review of present Defense Department research and development programs shows extensive work is being done on a new eight-inch atomic artillery shell—one that would presumably meet deficiencies found in the current weapon. For example the new one would travel further, thanks in part to a rocket assist. It would also have "advanced devices to deny unauthorized use"—said to be a system that would melt the insides of the shell if it were picked up the wrong way. The only security available for present nuclear artillery rounds is to blow them up or withdraw them.

The Defense Department is also pushing for a new Pershing II surface-to-surface missile system as a way to replace QRA aircraft. With a new radar guidance system and smaller yield, terminally guided nuclear warhead, the Pershing II was described by Secretary Schlesinger as less vulnerable than aircraft to surprise attack. The new warhead would have, according to one Defense Department report, "multiple, rapidly selectable low and moderate yields . . . designed to minimize undesirable nuclear effects" found in currently deployed high-yield weapons.

Are new weapons the price that must be paid to cut back the old? Possibly. It may be a necessary trade. In hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee almost a year ago, former Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Warnke agreed that deterrence was the prime role of US NATO nuclear weapons because they added "to the overall plausibility of a nuclear reaction in the event of a protracted conventional Soviet attack." But, Warnke added, ". . . I feel it is quite realistic to phase down the number from the present number of 7000 to something like 1000 or less . . . I think the Europeans would accept that provided that they recognized again that this was not the beginning of the end and was not an indication of a waning of American interest." This seems to be the path we are now on.

Walter Pincus

White House Watch

Rocky Digs In

Vice President Rockefeller presided on May 20 at two closed meetings of the presidential commission investigating allegations of CIA misdoing and, between the morning and afternoon sessions, addressed an economic forum on the woes and needs of minority unemployed that was sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus. Rockefeller asserted recognition of "the need to achieve as full employment of our nation's people as possible" and proper horror at the estimates of extremely high rates of unemployment among blacks in general and black teenagers (40 percent) in particular. He was headed for the door when Congressman Charles B. Rangel of New York shouted that

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he supposed that the Vice President's words meant that he fully supported the Black Caucus demand for all the federal money it might take to accomplish truly full minority employment. Rockefeller had meant nothing of the kind and his deputy press secretary, John Mulliken, gently hastened the Vice President's departure before he could pause and get himself into a characteristic and pointless argument with Rangel. At the CIA commission's meetings, among its last, Rockefeller and the other members in attendance went over every sentence of a voluminous staff draft—"lawyer's language," Rockefeller called it with obvious distaste—and debated, point by point, the essential conclusions to be stated in simpler form by the Vice President's long-time spokesman and writer, Hugh Morrow, when a report is issued on or around June 6. It had been a tiring day and Rockefeller was visibly tired when, at the end of it, he chatted with a reporter. The Vice President was friendly, alert, responsive, but his evident weariness was a reminder that he will be 67 years old next July 8 and 68 when the Republican national convention nominates candidates for President and Vice President in 1976.

Five months after he took his oath as the nation's second appointed Vice President and the first to serve under a President who had been the first appointed Vice President, Nelson Rockefeller tells associates at the White House that he hopes he has just about got through the initial period of adjustment to a new role, with the traditional emphasis upon ceremonial rather than substantive activities and the frustrations that commonly afflicted Vice Presidents. For reasons to be cited shortly Rockefeller believes that he is or soon will be in a position to make substantive contributions to the national and presidential policy process, chiefly on the domestic side but also in the foreign policy area. He has pretty well completed the reorganization and expansion of his own staff. With the assent and encouragement of President Ford, he has also completed an unprecedented takeover of the Domestic Council staff that, along with the much larger staff and directorate of the Office of Management and Budget, collects and collates for the President the attitudes and views of the huge domestic bureaucracy and attempts to exert presidential control, to the extent that control is possible, over that bureaucracy. Rockefeller, in short, has dug in for what's left of his and Gerald Ford's present terms and for whatever the President and fate may hold for him in and after 1976.

The Vice President's "downtown staff," the one that works for him in the Old Executive Office Building next door to the White House and is distinct from the staff that serves him on Capitol Hill in his capacity as president of the Senate, has grown from around 15 to 23 professional assistants and a total of 70 invuding drivers, secretaries and the like. The most recent recruit is Alexander ("Cousin Sam") Aldrich, who was a New York state official during part of Rockefeller's long governorship and will be the Vice President's staff specialist in urban affairs. He's called "Cousin Sam" because he is one of Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller's Aldrich cousins and Sam, for no discernible reason, is his nickname. Two senior and more prestigious acquisitions are former Governor Raymond P. Shafer of Pennsylvania and John G. Veneman of San Francisco, who was Undersecretary of Health, Education, and Welfare from 1969 to 1973.

Shafer and Veneman are history's first "counsellors to the Vice President." Shafer is to specialize in intergovernmental relations, meaning federal dealings and communications with state, municipal and county officials and governments, with emphasis on possible solutions of the problems inherent in these relationships rather than upon nuts-and-bolts matters. In theory, a theory that had better work if hopeless confusion is not to arise, the nuts-and-bolts of the relationships will continue to be handled by James Falk, the Domestic Council official who is assigned to the same area. Because of Veneman's long tour as No.2 man at HEW and Secretary Caspar Weinberger's intention to quit this summer or early fall, there naturally has been speculation that Veneman may get the HEW secretaryship. He's receptive but this inquirer is told at the White House not to expect it. Veneman's specialty with Rockefeller is to be an in-depth study of "federal human service programs," including everything from social security to unemployment benefits, food stamps, health insurance. Here again there are the makings of conflict and overlap with the reorganized Domestic Council functions of oversight and coordination in the same areas. Subject to actual experience, one must accept the argument that such difficulties and complications will be resolved or avoided by friendly coordination and by virtue of the knowledge of all concerned that they are working for both the Vice President and the President. Above all, the corrective fact is supposed to be that the Vice President considers himself, his intermittent Senate duties apart, nothing more and nothing less than a staff assistant to the President.

The grave doubts, in and outside the White House, that preceded and followed the President's agreement to make James Cannon, one of the many long-time associats on Rockefeller's gubernatorial and private staffs who came with him to the vice presidency, executive director of the influential Domestic Council staff, and Richard Dunham, another Rockefeller man, one of two deputy directors, have dissolved and vanished in remarkably short order. Cannon, a sometime journalist who in past years had been more of a lobbyist and a political arranger for Rockefeller than a substantive adviser, predicted before he was appointed executive director that if he got the place his approach and emphasis would be more upon the politics of the operation than upon the substance of programs.

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According to him and to White House officials who work with him, the opposite has happened. There is said to be more emphasis upon substance and less upon the mechanics of the federal operation than there was under either John Ehrlichman or his successor, Kenneth Cole. Not that the mechanics is neglected: the second deputy director, James Cavanaugh, a veteran of the Ehrlichman and Cole regimes, is responsible for oversight of current domestic operations and problems. The oversight is less rigid and inclusive than it was in the Ehrlichman days, but it's still there. Cannon takes that part of his responsibilities very seriously and, in concert with Richard Parsons and Arthur Quern, two other Rockefeller veterans who have been assigned to important slots on the Domestic Council staff, does what he can to make certain that no department or agency official does anything that would harm the President or be contrary to the President's wishes.

The council staff structure has been changed from five to nine principal policy and functional areas, based more upon the nature of issues than upon departmental and agency patterns. Dunham, the senior deputy director, concentrates upon study of existing practices and policies and upon recommendations for change where change is indicated. "Review groups" staffed by departmental and agency officials and managed by Domestic Council assistants are to conduct these studies and formulate recommendations. In one instance, social programs in the HEW-human service area, John Veneman is to oversee the Domestic Council overseers of the studies. Veneman, Dunham and other officials refuse to bother about the conflict and confusion seemingly built into this arrangement. Rockefeller certainly doesn't bother. It's this looming emphasis upon in-depth, long-range study and recommendation that principally explains and justifies his hope that he soon will be participating importantly and effectively in the policy process.

The Vice President and this reporter got into his present and prospective roles to some extent during the aforementioned conversation on May 20. Rockefeller's political prospect was the first subject. Last March 27, in a press conference aboard the plane bringing him home from the funeral for murdered King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Rockefeller explicitly disputed Ford statements that had seemed and were intended to dispel any doubt that the President considers himself committed to keep Vice President Rockefeller on the Republican ticket with him next year. In a remark that was widely unreported because of preoccupation with the beginnings of collapse in South Vietnam, Rockefeller said: "I feel very strongly that the President ought to wait until he gets close to the elections and then he ought to see who will best serve him and then he makes the decision and I don't want to be in any way in a position where he feels that he's lost his freedom of movement." When he was asked whether he'd ever said this directly to the President, Rockefeller answered: "I told him just the other day what I've been saying publicly, that I don't think he ought to commit himself." When asked what the President's reaction was, Rockefeller answered: "What he's said publicly was his reaction. I appreciate his generous remarks. But I feel he needs the freedom. Neither of us has been elected and"—staring grimly at the reporter—"that's a *very* significant factor. He's gonna run and he should keep the freedom to act as he thinks necessary when the time comes." When told that the emphasis with which he had said, *he's gonna run,* indicated no doubt whatever about that, Rockefeller said: "I said that the first day I was on the Hill [as Vice President]: I can't imagine a man accepting appointment to the vice presidency and succeeding to the presidency in these circumstances and then immediately turning himself into a lame duck."

Here Rockefeller went into a mild lecture to the press upon what he considered its neglect of "a good story"—namely, the growth of Gerald Ford in the presidency. Rockefeller on President Ford: "His confidence, his strength, his determination is growing all the time. One of the most interesting stories anyone could do would be about how much this man has changed in the five months that I've been observing him. It's been a very interesting evolution to a decision maker from however you describe a congressman's role."

Rockefeller was asked what part he took in deciding how to handle US problems in the wake of South Vietnam's fall and what to do about the seizure of the *Mayaguez.* Rockefeller ducked a direct answer, picking up the reporter's reference to the fact that he'd attended all NSC meetings on these matters, and said with evident pleasure: "I attend *all* the meetings. The President has been very generous in inviting me to all the meetings. If I have anything to say that I think would be useful to him, I say it. But I recognize fully that it's his responsibility and the Secretary of State's responsibility."

The reporter shifted to domestic policy and said he understood that the Vice President was both free and articulate in expressing differences, when there were any, with the President during their weekly discussions of domestic subjects. Rockefeller said this was so and continued: "He's an extraordinary man. He doesn't want people who parrot his points of view. He wants different points of view, then he makes his own judgments. So my role in those discussions would be to express a position but not to press a position." Had he taken a position for or against vetoing the coal strip-mining bill? No, Rockefeller said, because a staff position paper had set forth every conceivable point of view and there was nothing for him to add. But, he went on, there was a good example of his intervention in domestic discussions that he could talk about. It was the recent visit of Governor Hugh Carey of New York and Mayor Abe Beame of New York City to plead with

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President Ford for $1.5 billion in federal emergency loans to save the city from bankruptcy. Rockefeller, who had repeatedly expressed his scorn for what he considered to be the mismanagement and gimmickry that had got the city in its current shape, attended the meeting with the President and recalled his part as follows: "I commented, I intervened when I thought that information being presented to the President was incorrect. The Governor implied that federal help was their last resort, their last court of appeal. He didn't use those words, but that was the meaning. I said, 'Mr. President, you ought to know that the state of New York has the capacity to do exactly what the governor is asking you to do.'" Here Rockefeller went into technicalities that the reporter didn't understand. The essence of it was that the state in fact had the authority to loan the city the money it needed, on short term notes. Rockefeller said he also observed that if the city's credit was as good as Mayor Beame said it was, the city government could borrow emergency money from the five to six billion dollars it had accumulated in pension funds. With wry and obvious satisfaction, Rockefeller said in conclusion: "My intervention was not exactly welcomed [by the Governor and Mayor]. But that's a good example. I do speak up, but I always wait until I know whether a point that ought to be made has been made or will be made."

The last question that the reporter had time for had to do with the Vice President's friend, protegé and employee in years past, Henry Kissinger, and the pressures and attacks that he is suddenly under. How did the Vice President feel about it all? In view of his and Kissinger's past association, the reply was surprisingly detached and cool. Chuckling and grinning, Rockefeller said: "The wonderment is that it didn't happen before. He [Kissinger] has led a charmed life. Now he's joined the rest of us. And I must say, he's taken it like a real pro. I've been just delighted with the way he's rolled with the punches." As if realizing that he might have been expected to be a bit warmer than he seemed to be, the Vice President then said: "I've always had, as I'm sure you know, the most tremendous admiration for him, as well as affection. If you want to do what is right in this world, especially in a democracy, you're bound to have people who criticize you and disagree with you. The test of leadership is the ability to take it."

John Osborne

Henry Kissinger

The Domino that Can't Be Toppled

by Stanley Karnow

Until not long ago Secretary of State Kissinger looked like the shakiest domino in the domino theory, and it was widely predicted by political insiders, perhaps hopefully, that he would soon topple. His implication in the wiretapping of his staff, his colleagues' assistants and several prominent journalists appeared to make him as shabby as the certified scoundrels in the Nixon administration. His involvement in the Central Intelligence Agency's covert activities against the Allende government in Chile indicated that he had scant regard for moral considerations in the pursuit of US strategies abroad. His insistence that Congress vote military aid to Turkey during the Cyprus crisis revealed his penchant for subordinating the law to defense priorities. His tendency to blur the shortcomings of detente with the Soviet Union reflected his determination to camouflage the imperfections in his policies, and his duplicity in his Middle East negotiations aroused doubts about his integrity. His incompetence in economic matters seemed to make him unsuited for the key problems of the future. His crusade to defend a lost cause in Indochina raised questions about his wisdom, and, most recently, the disclosure that he had proposed the deployment of B-52s against Cambodia during the *Mayaguez* incident suggests a curious kinship to Curtis LeMay. But despite this accumulation of deficiencies and the criticism they have provoked, Kissinger is fundamentally as strong now as he has ever been—and for one essential reason. He navigates through Washington as no public figure has since Franklin Roosevelt, dominating his allies, outwitting his adversaries, and largely by dint of his forceful personality, overshadowing even the President in the realm of foreign affairs. After spending a week with Mr. Ford, John Hersey noted with alarm that, on foreign affairs, the President hears "only one voice, and a mercurial

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voice it is, Henry Kissinger's."

Kissinger's authority is all the more impressive in view of the fact that he has no constituency of his own, but relies almost entirely on his ability to maneuver, which he does to various effect. His manner is an important clue to his success, for it demonstrates the extent to which a master in the art of manipulation, as Kissinger is, can function within the Washington labyrinth despite setbacks that, in a parliamentary system, might have cost him his career. In short he has perceived that style is sometimes more significant than substance, especially when, for the sake of survival, he must operate in often diverse arenas. Just as courtiers gained status by proximity to the king, Kissinger realizes that he must stay near the President, the wellspring of his power, and thus he jockeys vigorously inside the White House to protect and promote his interests. At the same time, in his effort to exercise control over all aspects of foreign policy formulation and execution, he must circumvent or undercut rivals in the vast federal bureaucracy, and his reach stretches out of the State Department into the Pentagon and the CIA, and even into such agencies as the Department of Agriculture, where he seeks to influence international food decisions. He is continually and unevenly attempting to sway Congress, which has become increasingly truculent in the wake of Richard Nixon's downfall, and, in addition, he devotes tremendous energy to cultivating the media, partly in order to burnish his image and partly to mold opinion. Lately, too, he has been traveling around the country in an attempt to use his popularity, the result of his talented press relations, as a lever to upstage his Washington opponents. And finally, his frequent trips overseas reinforce his clout by bringing him close to foreign leaders and thereby creating the impression that only he has the contacts to carry out diplomacy in the grand fashion.

One of the major obstacles that faced Kissinger during the Nixon era was the hostility he encountered in H. R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman as they, for their own reasons, sought to build a wall around the President. Kissinger was able to vault this obstacle in two ways. In the first place he faced no competition from Secretary of State William Rogers, an amiable Nixon crony, and he therefore had a clear field in the foreign policy domain. Secondly, as the President's national security adviser, he had constant access to Mr. Nixon on a subject in which his White House foes lacked proficiency. As a consequence Kissinger became the indispensable aide. Early in the Ford tenure Kissinger again met with difficulties similar to those that had troubled him in the early Nixon days. A few of Mr. Ford's old pals, among them former Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, argued that the new President ought to purge the Nixon holdovers and urged him to remove Kissinger as head of the National Security Council. This idea was echoed publicly at the time by Rep. Albert Quie of Minnesota, a friend of both the President and Laird, who believed that the growing challenges to Kissinger's credibility would hurt Mr. Ford. The calculation behind this proposal was that Kissinger, if divested of his NSC hat, would also quit as Secretary of State, and it was an accurate ploy. Kissinger, claiming privately that he would not tolerate someone in the White House doing to him what he had done to Rogers, made it plain he would resign, and Mr. Ford, who then admitting to total ignorance of foreign affairs, not only rejected the notion, but, in an unprecedented gesture, went before the United Nations General Assembly to assure the world that "the Secretary of State has my full support and the unquestioned backing of the American people." There was no reason to doubt the President's sincerity at that time, and there is no reason to suppose that he has changed his views since. Indeed Mr. Ford reiterated in late March that Kissinger had consented to remain on the job "at least until the end of this term."

By no coincidence the President's renewed pledge of faith in him came amid fresh squabbles between Mr. Ford's aides and Kissinger. The dispute now focused on the President's plan for a major foreign affairs speech with a special section on the crumbling Vietnam situation. Functioning on the principle that a smart bureaucrat plots his course early and sticks with the project to the end, Kissinger instructed his staff to draft the address about two weeks in advance of its scheduled delivery, before rival speechwriters in the White House began their versions. The State Department draft emphasized a request by the President for nearly a billion dollars in aid to the Saigon government, in part because Kissinger estimated that by asking for a huge sum that Congress would surely rebuff, the onus for the Vietnam defeat could be shifted to Capitol Hill. This angle irritated such White House aides as Donald Rumsfeld, the President's chief of staff, counsellor Robert Hartmann and John Marsh, who deals with Congress. They asserted that the President ought to disassociate himself from Kissinger's Vietnam disaster by scaling down his appeal for funds and going easy on Congress. Moreover they leaked stories to the press through White House Press Secretary Ron Nessen of their differences with Kissinger. But their amateurish game was child's play for Kissinger. He camped at the White House, even skipping lunch with the Japanese foreign minister, until he was certain that the President had accepted his draft of the speech. Then, flexing his muscles, he saw to it that one of Nessen's assistants was fired. And, to signal his displeasure and perhaps to warn against similar attempts to contravene him, he confided to a *Time* correspondent that he had seriously thought of retiring if his Middle East negotiations had worked. It was an odd intimation, considering that he had promised the President only weeks before that he would stay in the job until January 1977.

The other day, cautioning that the concentration of

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the foreign policy machinery in one man is dangerous, Sen. Lloyd Bentsen introduced a bill to prevent a future Secretary of State from serving simultaneously as the President's national security adviser. The bill, which is clearly aimed at Kissinger even though its passage would not affect him, is not likely to make any headway. But, in the estimation of many foreign affairs specialists, there is a good deal of justification for Bentsen's concern. In theory the national security adviser is to screen the full range of views within the government and present the President with an impartial spectrum of options. With Kissinger in that post, however, the State Department's recommendations tend to get favored treatment. During the final weeks of the Vietnam debacle, for example, Kissinger's proposal for the slow evacuation of Americans and their Vietnamese collaborators was the only one offered at a National Security Council meeting while the suggestion for faster movement, put forth by the Pentagon, somehow got shelved. Kissinger's national security role is further fortified by a *tete-a-tete* session he has with the President every morning. His briefing is prepared late the night before by his State Department aides rather than by the NSC staff, which has become vestigial since Kissinger became Secretary of State. With all this, one senior US official says, "the President is in Henry's pocket."

"Bureaucracies are designed to execute, not to conceive," Kissinger once wrote, and that epigram describes precisely his attitude toward the State Department, which he basically considers to be a service organization that provides him with the information he needs to make decisions and to arrange his trips abroad. As a result the State Department is a large body of functionaries catering to Kissinger and a handful of key subordinates, only one or two of whom are fully aware of the Secretary's activities. The chief figure under Kissinger in this pyramid is Lawrence Eagleburger, whose title is Undersecretary for Management. He does everything from scout for talent and edit speeches to leak selectively to the press and suggest ideas. Another important aide is Winston Lord, whose policy planning staff is delegated to dream up long-range concepts but which, in reality, deals with assignments as varied as drafting the President's foreign policy speech to reassessing Middle East policy. Beyond these two men, Kissinger depends on a dozen or so others for specific tasks. Helmut Sonnenfeldt, like Kissinger a refugee from Nazi persecution, is his expert on Europe and the Soviet Union. Undersecretary Joseph Sisco and Assistant Secretary Alfred Atherton work on the Middle East, and Assistant Secretary Philip Habib handles East Asia, but these regional specialists are frequently subordinated to closer Kissinger associates such as Lord, who has a particular interest in China. Kissinger also seeks counsel from former academic colleagues like Paul Doty of Harvard, who concentrates on arms control.

The whole operation is run with obsessive secrecy. For example, Kissinger keeps an official visitor's schedule and another so confidential that, as one of his secretaries put it, "we often don't know whom he is seeing until the person walks through the office." Kissinger is especially secretive about cables that come in from certain US embassies abroad. The vital traffic is stamped NODIS, which "no distribution," and his purpose in restricting its circulation, according to one State Department employee, is to control the flow of information from overseas in order to reinforce his power within the bureaucracy. Similarly, there is practically no feedback from Kissinger to the rest of the State Department, so that, as one of his lesser assistants says, "sending him a memorandum is putting a message into a bottle and throwing it out to sea." In other words the entire State Department, except for a tiny coterie, is in effect blindfolded, and, as a critic of the system once pointed out, "Kissinger's pledge to institutionalize US foreign policy merely signified his intention to institutionalize himself."

Striving as he does to manage all US foreign policy, Kissinger also tries to make his influence felt in other government agencies. One of his main rivals is Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, with whom he has differed on issues ranging from the Middle East to Indochina. Kissinger consequently makes end runs around Schlesinger by communicating with Pentagon officers and civilian officials through two aides, Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, his national security assistant in the White House, who has old military affiliations, and Carlyle Maw, his former lawyer and now Undersecretary for Security Assistance, who has other channels to the Defense Department. A few years ago Kissinger attempted to extend his control over the defense budget by creating the Defense Policy Review Committee under his aegis as President Nixon's security adviser, but that effort failed. Kissinger's more recent concern for international economics has prompted him to strengthen his own State Department economic team to compete with the Treasury and Agriculture Departments, and his tactic in this rivalry is to reach the President first with proposals. The bickering has deprived the country of a cohesive economic policy.

Kissinger's biggest headache in Washington is Congress, which no longer gives him its automatic respect. In part, as Joseph Kraft has observed, the days are gone when Kissinger could claim, as he did during the Nixon administration, that he was the "good guy" among the rascals. Moreover the recent revolt on Capitol Hill against the seniority structure has made it impossible for him to cuddle up to the old leaders with any realistic expectation that they can deliver rank-and-file support. In addition many congressmen have been deeply disappointed by his failure to consult with them regularly, as he has repeatedly promised to do

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since his confirmation as Secretary of State in September 1973. Kissinger has further annoyed the legislature by denouncing its "interference and obstruction" to foreign leaders and newsmen on his trips abroad. Rep. John Brademas, the deputy majority whip, believes that Kissinger simply does not comprehend the American constitutional system. "He would be more comfortable with a dictatorship in which there is no Congress or a British-type parliament in which the executive and legislative branches are the same," Brademas says. "But he just doesn't understand our separation of powers arrangement under which Congress and the White House share responsibility. He once said to me, 'You make the laws and I'll make foreign policy'—as if the two were distinct. What I've been trying to tell him is that foreign policy must conform to the law, but I don't think I've been getting through."

There is no doubt, though, that Capitol Hill has been seeking to assert itself after years of toadying to Presidents, and this has inevitably led to clashes between Kissinger and congressmen who feel that they ought to make their voices heard in foreign policy. Kissinger's dispute with Sen. Henry Jackson over Soviet Jewish emigration, for example, tarnished both their reputations. His scrap with Frank Church over CIA activities in Chile did little to help his image. His fight with Brademas, Paul Sarbanes and Benjamin Rosenthal over military aid to Turkey turned out to be self-defeating, and his devious attempts to blame Israel for the breakdown of the Middle East negotiations has reduced his stature among pro-Israeli sympathizers. Above all his intransigence on Indochina lost him ground, especially in the House of Representatives, where a new generation of young congressmen with only Vietnam memories has become increasingly vocal. Still Kissinger seems to be searching for an all-purpose surrogate in Congress of the kind he had in former Sen. William Fulbright, who lost his seat last year. On the Senate side he has been paying particular attention to Hubert Humphrey, but that endeavor appears to be doomed. His current favorite in the House is Phillip Burton, the erratic representative from San Francisco who is bucking to replace Thomas O'Neill as majority leader and who apparently figures that Kissinger's help may improve his image. If that marriage of convenience is ever consummated, it will prove beyond question the old adage that politics produces strange bedfellows.

With all these attacks against Kissinger on Capitol Hill, however, few congressmen are actually calling for his resignation from either of his jobs. For one thing, as Rep. Les Aspin of Wisconsin points out, Congress is reluctant to shake up the administration after the Vietnam disaster out of fear that it will appear to be destructive. Aspin also notes that Kissinger is enormously popular in the provinces, where people see him as "the only guy in Washington who's doing something," and this restrains congressmen from going for his scalp. Moreover, as Paul Sarbanes submits, Kissinger is a short-term problem since elections take place next year, and nobody in Congress wants to complicate the coming campaign with another issue. It should be added, too, that numbers of congressmen who privately assail Kissinger easily succumb to his charm and wit and the illusion that he is giving the "real dope" in background briefing sessions. So Kissinger may have lost his superstar status on Capitol Hill, but, on balance, his position is by no means in jeopardy. Much the same can be said about his standing with the media.

Nothing preoccupies Kissinger so profoundly as the treatment accorded him by the press. He reads *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* every morning, scans monitored accounts of television news reports and commentaries, and studies resumes of other newspaper and magazine articles especially prepared by his staff. Moreover he will react directly to objectionable items. While he was in Peking last fall, for example, he sent a cable to a reporter in Washington complaining about a piece analyzing the present state of Sino-American ties, and six weeks later, encountering the same journalist at a party, he picked up the thread of his argument as if their conversation had been interrupted only a few hours earlier. Sometimes his gripes are passed on by Eagleburger or Robert McCloskey, the State Department's only effective press agent, and there is a purpose in this process. For, by paying attention to journalists even in criticizing them, Kissinger makes them feel important, and therefore, in the end, they treat him seriously. Peculiarly but shrewdly, Kissinger is most receptive to journalists who handle him roughly—on condition, of course, that they speak to significant audiences. Thus he maintains a close relationship with a columnist like Joseph Kraft even though Kraft often expresses reservations about Kissinger policies. This focus on the press served Kissinger well during the Nixon administration, for here again he was able to portray himself as the only "good guy" in a White House crowd that was probably prepared to abrogate the First Amendment.

Despite his troubles Kissinger has headed the Gallup survey's "most admired man" list for the past two years, and his awareness of this strength prompted him recently to go out to Kansas City and St. Louis in an apparent effort to remind his opponents in the East that the people like him even if politicians and intellectuals

Coming: Fiddling while Arthur Burns—consumers vs. the Fed

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do not. Kissinger carefully calibrated his speeches on the trip, playing to conservatives by voicing doubts about detente and appealing to liberals by proposing commodities arrangements to help developing countries. The tour was badly timed, coinciding as it did with the Vietnam showdown, but it is a fair guess that Kissinger will go back to the boondocks more often—or at least as often as he estimates that his position in Washington requires additional reinforcement.

Some Kissinger-watchers believe that he dreams of emulating Bismarck, who retained power for a generation. Others consider him a Castlereagh, whose world vision was torpedoed by an unappreciative British public. But whatever becomes of Kissinger, his style so far has been a *tour de force*, and the man who follows his act is to be pitied.

Before Watergate and After

Unchecked Wiretapping

by Alan Dershowitz

We are in grave danger of learning the wrong lessons from the Watergate and CIA "snooping" revelations. Most concerned Americans, I would venture to guess, believe that the wiretap, bugging and break-in excesses recently brought to light were unique to the Nixon clique. The Bills of Impeachment recommended by the House Judiciary Committee specifically included the charge that Nixon "misused" the FBI and other federal agencies by directing them "to conduct . . . electronic surveillance . . . for purpose unrelated to national security . . . or any other lawful function of his office. . . ." But serious abuses of the national security wiretap power have not been limited to this past administration. Would it be so clear, if all the facts were out, that the worst snooping offenses were carried out by persons working for such "bad guys" as John Mitchell, John Ehrlichman and Robert Mardian, rather than by those working for such "good guys" as Robert Kennedy and Nicholas Katzenbach?

Compare, for example, the notorious break-in of the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, with the far less publicized bugging of Martin Luther King's telephone, offices and hotel rooms between 1963 and 1965. The break-in at Dr. Fielding's office—despicable as it was—was a one-shot affair that threatened to violate the privacy of a handful of innocent patients. The King intrusions involved the taping of as many as 5000 separate conversations that violated the privacy of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of innocent King callers and visitors.

All reasonable people now condemn the Fielding break-in. Indeed its alleged mastermind, John Ehrlichman, was sentenced to prison for his participation in it (despite the fact that law enforcement officials have authorized "surreptitious entries" for decades). In striking contrast, however, many of the "good guys" who participated in the King wiretaps continued to justify it, both legally and morally, years after King's death; and even now they decline to repudiate it. Burke Marshall, who was an Assistant Attorney General for civil rights under Robert Kennedy at the time of the King episode, presents a case in point. Marshall, now deputy dean of the Yale Law School, is a "good guy" par excellence: a liberal with impeccable credentials, he serves as chairman of the board of the reform-minded Vera Institute of Justice, as a consultant to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and is generally active in "do-gooder" and liberal circles. I personally have the highest respect for him as an educator, lawyer and public servant.

In 1972—prior to the Watergate disclosures—I published the notes of a telephone interview I had with Marshall about the King taps. Though there is no evidence that Marshall himself had been consulted prior to the authorization, he justifies it unequivocally, implying that the reason the tap was authorized was that there were allegations that an enemy espionage agent had somehow become involved with Martin Luther King:

> *I can't tell you who the man was or what the allegations were . . . but I can tell you I think it would not be responsible for an Attorney General—in view of the characterizations of what*

Alan Dershowitz is professor of law at Harvard.

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that man was doing and who he was working for—for the Attorney General to refuse a tap . . . If you take it as being true that there has been an espionage system and that the Bureau [FBI] has an obligation to do things about that—if you put that all together, I would say you could say he [Attorney General Kennedy] refused too long.

Within the past few weeks information has come to light that casts serious doubt on the accuracy of the "national security" allegations purporting to justify the King intrusions. Several FBI agents and officials close to the King matter told *The New York Times* that the "national security rationale" for the "thousands of hours of electronic and physical surveillance" was "dubious," and that no actual grounds "for any national security concern" were "ever established." Indeed there is some question as to whether the FBI ever claimed any more than that two members of the American Communist party had infiltrated the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. This is a far cry from enemy espionage. Nicholas Katzenbach—who succeeded Robert Kennedy as Attorney General—has a somewhat different account from Marshall's. He claims that the taps were installed "for the protection of Dr. King"—the theory apparently being that unless King disassociated himself from the alleged Communists he would be open to attack and the civil rights movement endangered. While this may well have been the rationale of the "good guys" in the Attorney General's office, it was surely not what FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover—who requested approval for the taps—had in mind. In a report last year by then Attorney General Saxbe and FBI Director Kelly on the bureau's counter-intelligence program (called "Cointelpro"), it was revealed that one Cointelpro technique was "investigating the love life of a group leader *for dissemination to the press*" (Justice Department officials later identified this leader as King). Nor does it require hindsight to conclude that giving J. Edgar Hoover the power to tap King in order to protect him is like giving Jack Anderson the power to tap Richard Nixon in order to protect him. It was widely known in government circles *at that time* that Hoover was out to get King. FBI sources have recently disclosed that President Kennedy personally ordered Hoover to retrieve copies of a monograph about King's sex life that the FBI had circulated among government officials to discredit the black leader. (This incident, of course, had to have occurred before November 1963.)

This is not to suggest that Robert Kennedy or Nicholas Katzenbach was out to get King. They surely were not. Nor is it to say that the Justice Department lawyers who recommended authorizing the warrantless tap knew—or ever could have known—that King's hotel rooms would be bugged and that tapes of King's private life would be mailed to Mrs. King and newspaper reporters and played to "friendly" congressmen like John Rooney (all in violation of federal criminal statutes). It is to suggest, however, that these "good guys" either lacked the brains to see through Hoover's "justification" or the guts to stand up to Hoover's malicious and immoral vendetta against Dr. King. Since it is difficult to believe that any intelligent and experienced public official could really have believed—even back in 1963—that an FBI-conducted tap of King's phones was really necessary to protect King from being discredited or spied upon, the more logical inference is that these "good guys," (like three decades of "good guys" before and after them) were simply not willing to show the same kind of courage in confronting Hoover that they showed in confronting Southern governors.

My own speculation is that the Kennedy Justice people—consciously or not—decided to make a trade-off that they believed would serve their interests and the cause of civil rights: by giving Hoover the tool to carry out his personal vendetta, they would not risk his wrath—a wrath capable of effectively destroying much of the anticipated progress in civil rights. They probably reasoned (and correctly, I surmise) that Hoover *would* eavesdrop on King, *with or without their approval;* so why create an unnecessary antagonism that threatened more important interests? Having reached this decision the alleged justifications—the espionage allegation and the need to "protect" King—took on a more convincing aura to persons who would ordinarily apply a more critical eye.

The time has come for a complete airing of the King episode, and for a determination of whether any other such episodes lie hidden in locked government cabinets, in the refuse of shredding machines, or beneath six feet of water. Several former FBI operatives (including one whom the *Times* described as a "former high official of the agency") have apparently written to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activity asking for such an inquiry. And there is every reason to expect that the matter will be looked into. Several weeks ago I wrote Burke Marshall informing him of my intention to write an article on the subject, and asking him whether he wanted to stand by the statement he made to me about Attorney General Kennedy's refusing the King tap "too long." He responded that he did not feel he should comment further on the King wiretap stories since he was confident that the whole matter would be considered by the Senate and House special committees.

In the service of historical truth, and to avoid any appearance of partisan purpose, the committees should vigorously question all officials who participated in authorizing national security wiretaps over the past several decades—whether these officials were Democrats or Republicans, liberals or conservatives, good guys or bad. (Since Marshall has a formal relationship with the legal staff of the Senate committee, it might be appropriate for the King matter to be investigated and

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developed by a specially appointed lawyer.) These former officials should not be permitted to hide behind the screen of national security, certainly no more than the fallen Nixon martinets have been allowed to. The need for continuing secrecy concerning the alleged King espionage connection after more than 10 years is dubious. In any event many of the national security taps go back even further than a decade: it was in May of 1940 that President Franklin Roosevelt first authorized warrantless wiretaps concerning "grave matters involving the defense of the nation." Gradually the power was expanded to include "subversive activities," "domestic security" and "national security." We simply have no idea how this power was used or abused. Surely no one can now take seriously the assurance given by former Attorney General Herbert Brownell that "experience demonstrates that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has never abused the wiretap authority."

Indeed the only conclusion that seems crystal clear from the Watergate, King and Ellsberg disclosures is that anything J. Edgar Hoover was involved in carried the strong potential for personal abuse. This is not to suggest that every Hoover wiretap was improper, or that every improper wiretap was conducted under Hoover's aegis. Nor is it to imply that those government officials who cooperated with Hoover can shift the responsibility to him; they knew that Hoover was using the national security eavesdropping authority in wholly improper ways. Some—like President Johnson—used the fruits of Hoover's snooping to his own political advantage and, apparently on occasion, for his own personal amusement. (The fact that Hoover continues to be honored after the recent disclosures is strong evidence that we have not learned the lessons of Watergate. Though I am not one for rewriting history in the manner of the Soviet Union, I don't understand how we can tolerate the proposed naming of the yet to be completed FBI building after a man who—it is now apparent—committed crimes far more serious than those for which Mitchell, Haldeman, Ehrlichman and others have been sentenced to prison.)

The fact that Hoover was centrally involved in warrantless national security taps from the time of their initial authorization (and even before that, according to some sources) casts shadows over the purposes behind all of those taps. Even before the recent revelations, however, it was difficult to justify the need for a national security exception to the constitutional requirement of a warrant for all wiretaps. It is not as if courts have refused to give them at the drop of an affidavit—even after Watergate. The number of wiretap warrant requests that are turned down in any given year can generally be counted on the pitching hand of that famous old hurler, Mordechai "Three-Finger" Brown. And in the rare case where one is refused, the authorities can try again until they find a judge willing to authorize the tap.

In 1974 the Supreme Court held that no exception to the warrant requirement was permissible in cases of so-called domestic national security wiretap. It declared illegal the thousands of warrantless wiretaps that had been directed against American citizens suspected of activities inimical to national security—individuals such as Morton Halperin, members of militant black organizations, adherents to the Jewish Defense

"Of course I brought them with me—how do you think I got here?"

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League, peace activists, Weathermen, some journalists—and Martin Luther King. (The court left open the question whether warrants could be dispensed with in foreign intelligence cases, and the government continues to conduct them without prior court approval.) As a result of the Supreme Court's decision, there are currently pending in the courts several damage suits against John Mitchell and others who authorized these taps.

Despite the ease with which wiretap warrants are obtainable in national security cases, the warrant requirement does afford some protection in a narrow but important category of cases: those in which there is not even a pretense of legitimate governmental interest in national security. Few law enforcement or intelligence officials would have the temerity to ask a judge to authorize a wiretap on a senator or on the Democratic National Committee in order to gather damaging information about the private lives of political opponents. This is not to deny that in some situations—like the King case—a national security "justification" could be "offered." Nor is it to fall into the trap of believing that a warrant requirement—whether imposed by statute or constitutional interpretation—would be obeyed by the authorities. The government is the largest practitioner of "civil disobedience" when it comes to civil liberties, and there are few effective enforcement mechanisms. But a warrant requirement would make it somewhat more difficult for some authorities to get away with some particularly indefensible taps—and that is generally all that can be expected of a civil liberties safeguard.

A warrant requirement would also facilitate the gathering of information on *how many* wiretaps, or other electronic surveillances, are in operation and *who* is conducting them. It is almost impossible to determine which agencies are currently in the electronic eavesdropping business. A dialogue last year between Sen. Edward Kennedy and former Attorney General Saxbe is revealing:

> *Sen. Kennedy:* Can you tell us about any other organizations or government departments [in addition to the FBI] that are involved in any wiretapping at all today?
> *Mr. Saxbe:* We do not believe that there is anyone else and the penalties are rather severe. We know that there are illegal wiretaps in this country.
> *Sen. Kennedy:* The Secret Service is not doing any?
> *Mr. Saxbe:* No.
> *Sen. Kennedy:* And the CIA?
> *Mr. Saxbe:* No, sir.
> *Sen. Kennedy:* How about Army Intelligence?
> *Mr. Saxbe:* No.

When asked how he knew no organization other than the FBI was involved in wiretapping, Saxbe responded: "We sent our questionnaires to all of them because we did not know." Sen. Kennedy, not satisfied, pressed further:

> *Sen. Kennedy:* Do you have any reason to believe that there have been some congressmen who have been tapped?
> *Mr. Saxbe:* I have nothing. I have no evidence. If there were, it was not done through the offices of the Department of Justice.
> *Sen. Kennedy:* This is what we are trying to find out, who has been wiretapped, who authorized it, and whether it has been done by any governmental agency. The President himself [Nixon] has indicated that the Secret Service tapped his brother. What we are trying to find out is whether there are any governmental agencies which are involved in any wiretapping whatsoever.
> *Mr. Saxbe:* The answer, to the best of our knowledge, and we have made diligent search, is, no.

It was later disclosed, in a lawsuit where subpoenas rather than "questionnaires" were sent, that more than 25 government agencies were actually engaged in electronic surveillance programs of their own. (These agencies include: Drug Enforcement Administration; United States Secret Service; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; Naval Investigative Services; Joint Chiefs of Staff; Defense Intelligence Agency; Defense Mapping Agency; Defense Nuclear Agency; Defense Security Assistance Agency; Defense Supply Agency; Defense Civil Preparedness Agency; Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency; Defense Communications Agency; Department of the Army; Department of the Air Force; Defense Investigative Service; National Security Agency.) And there is simply no guarantee that other governmental agencies—and individuals—are not installing taps and bugs that have not yet surfaced. It is widely known, for example, that various governmental agencies contract with "private" investigating firms—often staffed with reliable former employees of the agency—to secure information "by any means necessary." The private firms then turn over the raw information without revealing whether it obtained it through a wiretap or through some other means (such as bribing an employee or friend of the "target"). Governmental eavesdropping today is simply out of control, and it is entirely possible that we have seen only the tip of the iceberg. A telephone company executive in Washington, DC has revealed under oath that over the last years there were consistently twice as many taps in the capitol alone as Justice had claimed there were operative in the entire country.

The Nixon clique *may* just have been the worst offenders, though we can never know this with certainty unless we learn more about what went on during earlier administrations. The King episode—which in my view is the single most reprehensible example of unjustified intrusion that we are aware of—

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is enough to raise serious questions about national security wiretap policies during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. We know, for example, from sworn testimony before the old Ervin subcommittee on constitutional rights that the 1968 McCarthy campaign against LBJ was bugged by military intelligence. That the King tap was authorized by well meaning good guys with beneficent purposes only demonstrates how pervasive the problem of wiretapping has been.

Louis Brandeis—our most foresighted justice—could well have been commenting on the comparison between the King wiretap and the Nixon outrages when, in a dissenting opinion condemning all wiretapping, he cautioned nearly a half century ago that:

> *. . . . Experience should teach us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the Government's purposes are beneficent. Men born to freedom are naturally alert to repel invasion of their liberty by evil-minded rulers. The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well-meaning but without understanding.*

Memories of Competence in the White House

Truman Nostalgia

by Gerald W. Johnson

Shortly before his death Walter Lippmann was asked by an interviewer to name the last really competent President of the United States and, after a moment's thought, replied "Madison." Mr. Lippmann, being a man of good judgment, was probably speaking sardonically, for if not he was certainly wrong on at least one count. In the list of Presidents, Truman came later than Madison, and was, if anything, more competent.

No man of sense, and emphatically not Mr. Lippmann, ever equated "competent" with "perfect." In business, and there is no reason to doubt in politics also, a competent man is one who is steadily on top of his job, keeps it moving, abstains from graft and nepotism and when he retires leaves the company, or his section of it, in better shape than it was when he took over. Thus a President who has announced in advance and with complete candor what he intended to do if elected, and then proceeded to do it, cannot fairly be called incompetent. If great damage results it goes to prove the incompetence, not of the President but of the electorate that, knowing the man's quality, elected him.

In Truman's case perfervid moralists were joined by the overeducated intellectuals who are commited to the proposition that no man can know anything unless he has learned it by the method of sitting at the feet of Gamaliel, that is, by learning it from certified and authorized pundits, usually in university faculties. By such intellectuals it can never be granted that a farmer, for instance, can learn anything important through being whipped by a combination of poor soil and dry weather in northwestern Missouri, or being whipped again trying to operate a retail merchandising business in a postwar depression, or by fighting, with success, the wolfpacks of crooked contractors and grafting politicians that swarm around every sizable construction job in a county being rapidly urbanized. Most emphatically they do not believe that a man learns anything important by tongue-lashing back to their guns a battery of half-trained artillerymen who had panicked when enemy shells first started bursting around their ears. But the men knew that the captain knew what it is necessary to know in the front line and before the cease-fire came that same battery had fired 10,000 rounds at the enemies of this country.

If the question is raised, what has this to do with the operation of a democratic system of government? the answer is, everything that is essential. Civilized men of course prefer to see their government conducted with dignity and, as far as may be, with grace. But it must at all cost be conducted with honesty and courage or it will inevitably blow up, as the United States exploded when Watergate exposed the perfidy and mendacity that had been rampant in Washington. Nixon, to be sure, wasn't the only President who was unfit for the office; he was merely the one who went too far and got caught. Nor is it likely that he was the last. Considering the imperfectibility of mankind, it is a safe guess that there will be others in the future. If too many are elected in

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succession, the republic will not survive but that, *Deo gratias,* will be our grandchildren's problem, not ours.

Harry S Truman was propelled into the presidency with no training for the ordeal he was destined to endure, which is the greatest blot on the record of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Truman didn't even know that the atomic bomb existed, although it was almost ready for its first test, and he had only the ordinary newspaper reader's knowledge of the intricate military arrangements among the Allies then sweeping down upon Berlin from east and west, to say nothing of their various postwar plans, joint or individual. It is hard to imagine how a man could be more unfairly thrust into a position of immeasurable responsibility. It is no wonder that he said that he felt that the weight of the moon and all the planets had fallen upon him.

But he knew and faced the terrible truth that was being sedulously avoided by every ambitious politician who was nothing more, but which it was the President's duty to face. It was the truth that, with the exception of the United States, 90 percent of the western world was wrecked. The United States, too, was seriously hurt. The republic had spent both blood and money lavishly in Europe, having at the same time to fend off a deadly attack from Japan, but we were still on our feet. Germany was nearly finished. The Japanese navy was virtually wiped out but the home islands were not yet invaded and to judge by the way their army had fought on the islands to the south, the invasion would be very difficult. Truman's ablest military advisers told him that he might expect a million casualties, with Japanese losses two or three times as heavy. The Pentagon figured that three or four million people, counting ours and theirs, would be killed or wounded in an invasion and the land would be completely devastated. The generals wished to avoid that if it could possibly be done, but the militarists still in power in Tokyo were adamant and our people felt that the fanatics' will would not be broken without some terrific shock. So President Truman was informed and he had no just cause to reject the Pentagon's judgment.

It so happened that the necessary shocker was at hand, but the scientists who had fabricated it stood appalled by the effectiveness of their own work. To produce the necessary effect it must be used against a huge industrial complex or a very large military installation, either of which would catch great numbers of civilians and 100,000 casualties might easily result. But an invasion, the experts told the President, would produce three or four million casualties, one-fourth to one-third of them ours.

The President's decision was prompt and realistic. We had two bombs. They were to be dropped on two ports used by the military and naval commands of Japan. Hiroshima was an army port of embarkation as well as a naval station at which two divisions, some 30,000 men, were assembled but had not been shipped out because there was very little chance that they could escape our submarines, surface craft and planes. The other port was Nagasaki, used more for shipment of supplies than for personnel. In obedience to the President's order Hiroshima was hit on August 6, 1945, and Nagasaki on August 9. On August 14, the Japanese government asked for terms. By the most careful estimates available—admittedly none too exact—in the two cities 120,000 people were killed or died of their injuries. For that decision Truman has been denounced as a fiend, regardless of the fact that three or four million, including one million of ours, did *not* die in an invasion of Japan.

There is and has always been as good reason for calling Truman a great humanitarian as a ruthless butcher. He was, of course, neither. He was simply a man who turned a deaf ear to the ballyhoo and acted on such facts as were known to him. He died serenely confident that in a hot spot he had done his plain duty, no more and no less. His decision may or may not have been barbarous, but there is no doubt that results followed fast. And that supports the trend of this argument that Truman was a competent President.

In any event, his case does not rest entirely, or even chiefly, on his handling of the bomb. In addition he had to make four other decisions, each of which has profoundly affected the political history of this country for 25 years, and *every single one of them was right!* They were the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Berlin airlift and Korea.

To call the Korean decision right will set some people's teeth on edge—and very honest people, too—but only because they do not understand that I refer to Truman's Korean policy, not to MacArthur's. Truman's error, for which he paid a terrific penalty, was in not adhering to the assertion on the plaque that he kept on his desk in the White House: "The Buck Stops Here." Why he slipped is anybody's guess, but the one offered here is false modesty. The only time he had stood in battle was as a mere captain of artillery, so who was he to dispute with a four-star general on a point of strategy? The correct answer was, he was the commander-in-chief, outranking any number of stars. But he faltered about pulling his rank and permitted the general to proceed on, as the event proved, incorrect intelligence and outdated maps, straight into a Chinese trap and the worst licking inflicted on an army of the United States since Bull Run. Truman paid the price and not unjustly, for there can be no toleration of faltering in the top command. True, he busted that general and put in one who could, and did, drive the enemy beyond the line to which the United Nations had authorized Truman to advance, and stop there. But it was too late. Truman still bears the blame for a messed-up campaign, and Eisenhower gets the credit for salvaging it. Both judgments are technically correct, but factually completely wrong.

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So also with NATO and the airlift—political opposition has found plausible pretexts on which to denigrate both, but the discredit is achieved only by some very tortuous reasoning. On the face of the facts, NATO gave the European democracies a chance to pull themselves together, and the Berlin airlift was a fast and sharp but not excessive reaction to calculated Russian aggression. Both were indicative of high competence in the White House.

However all these are relatively small matters as compared to the great feat of the Truman administration, for which, incidentally, he tried to pass the credit in very large measure to his Secretary of State, Gen. George C. Marshall. The general demurred, pointing out that at least half a dozen men, some in, some out of office, played important parts in devising the scheme. But Truman authorized it, and Truman ordered Marshall to proclaim it—thereby getting his name attached to it—in a speech at Harvard. So if Truman must bear the chief blame for Korea, he cannot fairly be denied chief credit for the Marshall Plan.

Of course it was misinterpreted both ways, which proves nothing about the idea itself but is simply another demonstration of mankind's disposition to believe any romantic fairy tale rather than a dull narration of colorless facts. The sweetest of the romantics rhapsodized over the Marshall Plan as the most glorious act of magnanimity in the history of nations, and the sourest of the same breed denounced it as the most vicious demonstration of sentimental imbecility in the history of nations.

Both were off the target by a long sea mile. The Marshall Plan was the act of a man of sense who knew, as everyone capable of knowing anything knew that the free nations belonging to Western civilization were, with one exception, completely devastated. Getting them into production again would take many years unless they were given an initial push by someone who could. The only nation that could was the United States. These facts were no official secrets.

The one fact that all romantics, sweet or sour, ducked, but that Truman faced was that in the matter of giving help, if the United States could, the United States should. This applied even on the narrow ground of advancing our own interests, for the prostrate nations had been and could again be our best customers.

That, howled all the romantics, is a lie! We should always act, said the sweet ones, "in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," but mainly in the name of the Great Jehovah, for we are the holiest of all the tribes of men, and appointed by God to lead those who sit in darkness into the white light of sanctity. The sour also demanded inaction, but on different grounds. They held that Silent Cal, greatest of all political gurus, in two maxims had prescribed our proper course in such cases. One was, "The business of America is business," the other, "They hired the money, didn't they?" But with the advantage of hindsight we know now that Coolidge prosperity led into the crash of 1929 and the Great Depression, while the Marshall Plan led into the biggest and longest boom in our economic history.

The proposal of the Marshall Plan was, in brief, that if the chief financial officers of the war-damaged nations of Europe, including our late enemy, Germany, and our late Communist ally, Russia, would calculate what immediate repairs were required to get the European nations operating again, the United States would take their word for it and foot the bill up to $20 billion. In Russia the offer met with a surly refusal, and even Russia's captive nations, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, were forbidden to accept. Many Americans forget that the financiers of the other nations calculated that $12 billion would turn the trick, and that was all that we actually put up. But it worked a near miracle of restoration, and it won us a measure of confidence and respect such as we had never enjoyed before. In retrospect we can see that, at that moment, the American republic touched a level of power and prestige above any in its previous history. And it was accomplished without firing or threatening to fire a single shot.

But all that is now history, finished, water over the dam and of contemporary value only as a suggestion of what can be done when we are resolved on action. But the suggestion acquires immense significance when we consider who did it. Literally, the answer is millions of Americans, but what we mean is who gave the word to go and pointed the way. To that, the astonishing answer is, no mental giant, no profound master of statecraft, or philosophy, or science, or art, nobody but Harry S Truman, so completely the average man that you and I would not fear to match wits with him, although we might back off a bit from a comparison of our honesty and nerve. Croesus couldn't buy nor the devil scare him, but only in those two qualities did he stand head-and-shoulders above the rest of us.

What of it? Why, nothing, if you can see nothing in it. But it is possible that you may see a great light in the story if you are one of those who, knowing how dark is the future and how great the difficulties in our way, have been praying to whatever God you worship that of His grace He send us a Washington, a Jefferson, a Lincoln to lead and deliver us. In the light of this gleam from the past, you may be moved to moderate your demands upon the Lord. We can make do with less. If a beneficent Providence would grant us, say, two-thirds of the clear vision with which Truman saw what he ought to do, and even half of the courage he needed to do it, the republic would be safe. And who knows? Those gifts might be enough to carry us to a summit on which the air perhaps is purer and the light brighter, even than on the level to which that very average man led us in 1947.

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Stanley Kauffmann on theater

The $ Value of Man

(Lepercq)

Robert Wilson, the creator of *The Life and Times of Joseph Stalin* (*TNR*, Jan. 5&12, '74), has changed status. In a short time he has moved from underground hero of the avant-garde to darling of the chic. This is not, I emphasize, because of any cheapening he has done; his "frame," as Erving Goffman would say, has changed. *The New Yorker* has run a long profile on him, his next show was put in a Broadway theater, and many reviewers seemed to vie for the number of times they could call him a genius.

Now that he has produced still another show, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, it's worth taking another look to see what he's doing and what's happening around him. At the ANTA a couple of months ago he presented for four weeks *A Letter for Queen Victoria*. This mere three-hour show (as compared with his 14-hour *Stalin*), with interesting music by Alan Lloyd, was suggested to Wilson by an eccentric letter that Victoria had once received, though of course that letter could hardly have been more incidental to what we saw and heard. *Stalin* had frequently been effective because it had essentially been painterly: with an immense cast, mostly of volunteers, Wilson had created a series of often exquisite pictures that melted into one another. *Victoria* was predominantly literary: with a much smaller cast and fewer pictures, Wilson leaned heavily on dadaist dialogue with a lot of screaming. Some of the pictures were fine, like one of aviators against a wall in Chirico light (no point in trying to *explain* that), but the verbal emphasis made it all much less interesting. Besides, the very fact that we knew in advance that the show ran three hours, and so could actually be sat through entire, made it more tedious than the several hours of *Stalin* that one could slice out as one wished. Prominent in the *Victoria* cast was Christopher Knowles, a 13-year-old boy "with severe brain damage" (says *The New Yorker*) who had also been in *Stalin*. I felt as if I were often intruding on therapy, which was going well but which might better have been private. Between discomfort and boredom, I had a poor three hours.

Then a few weeks later I happened to hear a painter and a poet discussing *Victoria*, enthusiastically identifying for each other the artistic source of this visual effect and the literary source of that verbal one, though neither of them said much about what Wilson had done with these influences, what work he had created. (This is in marked contrast with Andrei Serban, whose *Trilogy* (*TNR*, Nov. 23, '74) surely also showed influences but who summoned those influences into a new, cogent, forceful work.) I began to see that *Victoria* had served as a test of in-ness.

Wilson's latest piece is said to be written and directed by the boy Knowles and Wilson. *The $ Value of Man* is done in the Lepercq Space of the Academy, the same huge, high-ceilinged room in which Peter Brook's company last appeared. Tiers of seats are placed at the narrow ends of the rectangle, seats on the floor along the sides. It begins with a man coming out and, in a spotlight, whirling a bit (Wilson is big on whirling), then falling down for a while as in acting class practicing falls. Then a singer leads out a file of 16 or 18 people. The singer does (I think) an Iranian song, beautiful, with delicate quarter-tone flutings—irrelevant to what follows but the most beautiful element of the evening. The group whirls, waves, kneels, stretches, etc.—the whole oxymoronic free routine that Brook's group did on that spot two years before.

Still, despite this beginning, *Value* is the most thematically concentrated Wilson work I've seen. At a microphone on one side young Knowles then recites, so far as one can understand the boy's impaired speech, a TV commercial; then there is some action about it by the group. This happens three more times, while at a microphone across the floor Wilson prompts the boy's memory. (My discomfort with the boy has certainly not decreased.) Wilson also reads snippets from a newspaper account of an experiment in ethics that a philosophy professor conducted with his class, from which the show gets its title. The stage actions, meant to symbolize the commercializing of modern man, include some group movements, roughly choreographed, of some 60 people wearing white dresses or trousers, usually barefoot, with dark suit jackets and wide-brimmed hats, carrying cigars and pistols—both men and women. (That's how you tell crass people, by their cigars.) The best picture of the evening is done twice, once at either end of the space. High green squares are erected with lights inside them; the black-suited people stand on ladders around the squares with playing cards, as if around huge gaming tables, chattering sporadically while violins drone a country-music vamp. It's a good theater cartoon of money madness.

After some two hours of the scheduled two and a half, the audience, which had been urged to move about freely, was milling around the floor between the "games" and a table where a man was working an adding machine, while smoke pots began to fill the air. As the audience milled, I milled out.

Wilson has the asset of a cultivated sensibility (the analytic painter and poet were right) married to a great innocence. Nothing is too complex, too venturesome or too familiar for him to attempt it. His cultivation gives his productions their sporadic beauties; his blitheness in the face of theater obstacles gives him freedom. I sense that the audience is responding to a kind of cultural flattery as much as to achievement, to his lack of inhibition as much as to his accomplishment.

My own trouble with much of Wilson's work is not the quiz-show aspect, which is as flattering to me as anyone when I can "pass," nor his ingenuous-

(continued on page 33)

Films Worth Seeing

Amarcord. Instant classic. Fellini's touching, bitter, funny lyric of his youth.

Hearts and Minds. Politically pallid, this Vietnam documentary still does some graphic reminding.

The Middle of the World. Italian woman and Swiss married man. Lovely to watch, intelligent, though substantively disappointing.

Monty Python and the Holy Grail. Why not? The Sons of the Goon Show burble on, often amusingly.

The Passenger. The eye is Antonioni's eye, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

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Reconsideration

The Novels of Janet Frame

Since her debut in 1960 with *Owls Do Cry*, Janet Frame, a New Zealander, has published eight novels, two volumes of short stories and a book of poems. But for all her good, substantial work, she is rarely reviewed, and when reviewed she remains the perennially "interesting" writer. Critics have offered no higher praise because Frame has never written a "totally successful novel." She may *never* produce the fabled perfect work. She is not that kind of artist; and to have received her works with such expectations has been unjust.

Braziller is the American publisher of the work of Janet Frame discussed in this reconsideration. Still in print:

Owls Do Cry, 1960

Faces in the Water, 1961 (paper; Avon)

The Edge of the Alphabet, 1962

Yellow Flowers in the Antipodean Room, 1969

A State of Siege, 1966

Daughter Buffalo, 1972

Frame's output is tightly unified. *Owls Do Cry*, like Faulkner's *Flags in the Dust*, contains the seeds for all her later work. *Owls* tell of the Withers, Bob and Amy, and their four children, Francie, Daphne, Toby and Chicks, a poverty-ridden Southern New Zealand family. Industrialism has blackened everything. But the children, being children, take pleasure in simple things. They "talk of treasure" in their travels through the city rubbish dump, a place of wonder and peace. But the dump proves deadly as well. Here Francie, the eldest, on the eve of leaving school and beginning work, is killed in a freak accident. The death lingers in the minds of the remaining children, affecting each: Toby, the son, tries to rise above poverty by hoarding every penny he makes; Chicks escapes through marriage, living with her husband Timothy in the city, climbing the social ladder rung by rung; Daphne goes mad and is institutionalized.

Owls introduces Frame's basic themes. The innocence of childhood is of great importance. All things produce wonder in the child. Language is truth, and nursery rhymes give particular pleasure. The Withers children have a secret communion with nature: ". . . sometimes at night . . . when the pink-footed mouse is less afraid, and the hedgehog uncurled and sniffing along in the grass and leaves outside, and inside warm with no hurricane of world to threaten the walls of the house, Daphne and Francie would sit together. . . ."

But adult responsibilities force children to seek more mature obsessions. The sharp division between youth and age is articulated by Bob Withers as he tells his children why Francie must leave school and help support the family. "Listening to their father say about Francie, the children felt afraid, as if suddenly the walls of the house would collapse and the roof disappear and leave them, naked with nothing to shut them away from the world and the world in one stride would walk in and take possession of them, holding them tight in its hand of rock and lava, as if they were insects, and they would have to struggle and kick and fight to escape and make their way." Francie's trip to the dump was a violation of the sacred rite of passage. She had returned to a childhood haunt without the childhood wonder and was punished for her trespasses.

Then there is madness. For Daphne it is solace, a treasure, an alternative to the world's madness, more rewarding than Toby's drive for money and Chicks' social climbing. "Life is hell," says a character in one of Janet Frame's stories, "but at least there are prizes." Madness is a prize, hard won and to be cherished. Daphne's tragedy is that she is cured. She returns home to work in the woolen mills, and it is like death.

For all the novel's beauty, *Owls* presents Frame's weaknesses as well. She never quite reconciles her poetic philosophizing with the naturalistic detail that fills the novel. Her prose is flowery when facts are needed. But at times the metaphors link with reality in startling ways. Daphne's return to the mill is a case in point. Before Francie's death, Daphne knew that her sister would have to "fight the armies of tangled wool, oh it was all tangled, being alive was tangled, and there was Francie going by herself everyday to face it and fight it." Daphne, cured, takes Francie's place; and on the eve of her return to the mill, she feels she will "die tomorrow when snow falls criss-cross to darn the believed crevice of my world." The tangled wool is industrialism's web, despoiling nature and snaring the innocent like flies.

Janet Frame is best when simplest. The whole of her second novel, *Faces in the Water*, perhaps her best known work, reads like Daphne's portion of *Owls*. The setting is an asylum and the subject is again madness. The conflict between the real and the imaginary is evident from the disclaimer: "Although this book is written in documentary form it is a work of fiction." Parallels to nature are drawn: madness is a "season of peril," and "in spite of snap dragons and dusty millers and the cherry blossoms, it [is] always winter." Frame's finest achievement is the stinging wit she brings to institutional routine. As the patient realizes, ". . . orders are to be obeyed and floors are to be polished without anyone protesting and faces are to be fixed into smiles and weeping is a crime."

But madness is never discarded. It makes one question basic concepts. Language proves false, and the mad wisely learn a different tongue. This idea arises in *The Edge of the Alphabet* and is reworked in *Scented Gardens for the Blind*. The edge of the alphabet is "where words crumble and all forms of communication between the living are useless." Madness is here a figurative death, and the madman is the other, a seer. Not just a diagnosible illness, madness is a "natural" phenomenon that, like truth, can appear at any moment. For Malfred Signal of *A State of Siege*, it is self-willed. A spinster art teacher, she has spent her life tending her sick mother; now with the old woman's death Malfred feels free and ready to enter "the person 'two-inches behind her eyes.'" She is the perfect Frame character: "All her life Malfred had felt as if she had been bound in someone else's dream, as she had read that some Eastern children had their limbs bound to set them in the shape desired by their parents and by tradition." She moves from her home to the South Pacific paradise of Karemoana, an island off New Zealand. In going to Karemoana a New Zealander travels north, but the weather gets warmer rather than colder. All "traditional" sense of direction is reversed.

Malfred spends an unsettling first night in her secluded island cottage. A

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storm rages and, terrified by a constant mysterious knocking, she repeats her past, reliving scenes with her family and with her one-time lover Graham, a casulty of the war. Three days later she is found dead; there are no signs of struggle, but a stone wrapped in newspaper lies by her side. Like the ending of *Scented Gardens*, a message remains but the language is indecipherable: "That was all. Help, Help, and last century's or tomorrow's news in verse. Nothing to tell who was the writer or who had thrown the stone."

Godfrey Rainbird of *Yellow Flowers in the Antipodean Room* suffers a similarly frightening experience. Hit by a car, he is pronounced dead, only to rise like Lazarus. The connection between death and madness is here reestablished. Godfrey, in his second life, is truly the other; he was returned from a land of which no human can speak and is persecuted for his "differences."

And in *Daughter Buffalo*, her most recent work and the first with an American setting, the theme would seem to have been taken from the first line of *The Edge of the Alphabet:* "Man is the only species for whom the disposal of waste is a burden, a task often ill-judged, costly, criminal—especially when he learns to include himself, living and dead in the list of waste products." The novel follows Dr. Talbot Edelman, a student of death, and his experiences with Turnlung, an expert on the subject, during three weeks of a New York City summer. True, the work at times reads more like a tract than a novel; this is an occupational hazard for any writer who traffics in ideas. But Janet Frame has diagnosed the problem well and, when she faces it, animates her theme beautifully.

Dr. Edelman's contention is that Americans are "reluctant to include the experience of death in their lives, regarding it until the end as their last guaranteed immunity." He visits his grandfather at a rest home and finds that the man has "no disease except the frailty of old age." When Edelman tells his family of the visit, they ask reluctantly after the old man, sighing when they hear he is well. But the sigh is "a sound like the faint whirr made by the garbage disposal unit when it comes to rest after doing its work." These images startle us, then force us to reexamine our lives.

Daughter Buffalo has no true ending. There could be no logical one for such a book. But the work's success does not simply depend on its own individual accomplishments. Janet Frame's novels have never been self-contained units. They are like separate colors in a larger pattern. More than just an interesting novelist, Janet Frame is a complex, challenging artist whose overall achievement may soon be justly praised.

Robert Leiter

Robert Leiter's work has appeared in *The Nation* and *Commonweal.*

Old Master

Michelangelo by Charles de Tolnay

(Princeton University Press; $19.50)

Charles de Tolnay first gazed up at the Sistine Chapel ceiling one "limpid and radiant" day in September 1921; never since, he claims, has he forgotten the almost otherworldly *lift* of the spirit he felt. Born in Budapest in 1899, he studied at German, Italian and Austrian universities; for many years his home and his publisher were in Princeton. Now, at 76, he is settled comfortably as director of the Casa Buonarotti in Florence—appropriate reward for a man who has been slaving away in the tortuous mines of Michelangelo scholarship for over 50 years: the bibliography of this book lists 75 of his own studies of the artist, written in four different languages.

The new book, a birthday offering to Michelangelo Buonarotti, who was born 500 years ago last March, comes advertised as a "distillation of his monumental work," a gigantic five-volume scholarly study published (in different editions) over a period of almost 30 years. Even this "little" version isn't precisely new: it's a translation of a French study de Tolnay first published in 1951 and revised in 1970. A few post-'70 changes are included to take into account recent events (the revealing digs beneath St. Peter's main altar, the mad vandalizing of the *Pietà*), and some second thoughts de Tolnay has had about dates and attributions.

Most of the text, however, can be found virtually word for word (and rendered in generally more felicitous English) in one of the five quarto volumes that started coming out in 1943. De Tolnay is remarkably faithful to his own ideas of 30 (or 40, or 50) years ago. But those volumes were for scholars, libraries: they weigh a ton, they cost a fortune. They offer about 230,000 words of running text, but even *more* words of connoisseur's notes and catalogue descriptions—as well as *1700* illustrations, which is getting pretty thorough for the work of an artist who has left us about 50 surviving major works.

The quinquecentennial American version of de Tolnay's *Michelangelo* is almost half photographs (385 of them). Some sculpture-sequences and reproductions of drawings are especially eloquent, but the reader in search of the *look* of Michelangelo's work is far better served by the gorgeous (and less expensive) Phaidon volume edited by Ludwig Goldscheider, and revised just this year. Goldscheider's illustrations are much larger than de Tolnay's, much more generous to the major works: his Sistine Chapel sequence is lavishly thorough. They are better photographed—occasionally in telling color—and far better reproduced. The shorter de Tolnay is clearly aimed at a popular market, but it will never win that market by its visual presentation.

What one may read it for instead are the *ideas* of its celebrated author. Michelangelo is perhaps the figure in all art history the most difficult to understand, the artist least adequately explained by his historical context or biographical sources. It seems no easier to account for the near-universal appeal of works like the *David* and the Vatican *Pietà* than for the appalling uniqueness of *The Last Judgment*, at once so grotesque and so overwhelming; or for the freakishly moving modernity of the *Rondanini Pietà.*

De Tolnay very specifically dissociates himself from the legend-makers and popular biographers of Michelangelo, from Vasari and Condivi through Symonds and Rolland. He insisted (in *The Youth of Michelangelo*) that "the biography of Michelangelo forms the most complete contrast to his artistic thoughts," and thereby justified his separating the two, and scanting the former. In this new volume Michelangelo's nonartistic life is dispensed with in a 13-page biographical note.

Instead he concentrates on Michelangelo's philosophical and spiritual ideas, their relation to and expression in

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his work, through reference to the artist's letters and poems and more often by investigating the thought of his "circle," from the neo-Platonism of the court of Lorenzo de'Medici to the so-called "Catholic Reformation" ideas of Vittoria Colonna and her friends. Most often, however, he simply speculates, in the manner of the old Germanic allegorists, and one is not always convinced. Maybe the right side of the *David* is more tense and closed than the left because Michelangelo thought one side to be God's and the other the devil's. Maybe the Christ Child stands between the legs of the *Bruges Madonna* to symbolize a fetus in the womb. Maybe *The Last Judgment* is meant to represent the doctrine of justification-by-faith-alone, mingled with ancient astral myths. But de Tolnay, who has been propounding these readings for decades, no more persuades me here than he persuaded most of his fellow scholars in early articles in the five-volume set.

At other times his "integrative" interpretations (of the total scheme of the Sistine ceiling, for example, or the ensemble of the Medici Chapel) provoke fruitful thought. Now and then, in an attempt to communicate the power of one work or another, he will leap into mystical evocations or Pateresque prose-poetry of uncertain sense as most people do who write of Michelangelo. Sometimes it almost works:

> *The Moses is the seated figure of a colossus, trembling with indignation: a human cataclysm. Here, the omnipotence of passion unleashes elemental forces. The torrent of his mighty beard, the power of the rugged knee which breaks through the flowing cloak as if through boiling lava, are merely emanations of an inner turmoil provoked by indignation and anger . . .*

It is all very well to scorn the vulgarizers and sentimentalists, those who could reduce Michelangelo to a tormented, pope-defying genius-homosexual. But de Tolnay goes to the other extreme, surely, in pretending that almost all of his work can be explained by clear philosophical or religious ideas. There *are* grotesque and troublesome elements running all through the artist's long career, the vaguely repulsive *Bacchus*, those nude teases lounging behind the Doni *Holy Family*, the Julian Altar slaves, the 20 tormented *Ignudi* of the Sistine Chapel ceiling: all those monstrous straining thighs and thoraxes painted on the wall. But in the manner of Leon Edel protecting Henry James, de Tolnay defends every work of his hero's as logically sensible and artistically flawless, and simply overrides the esthetic and biographical questions that still disturb many of his admirers.

De Tolnay has tried to write a kind of artist's life that keeps to a civilized middle ground between the minutiae of academic scholarship and the vulgarities of pop biographies. But 50 years in the archives, nosing out attributions, fencing with rival scholars, may have been too much. "It was during the last two decades of his life . . . that Michelangelo created his most beautiful . . . works of art": an unorthodox, but defensible opinion. De Tolnay makes a noble case for the importance of Michelangelo's

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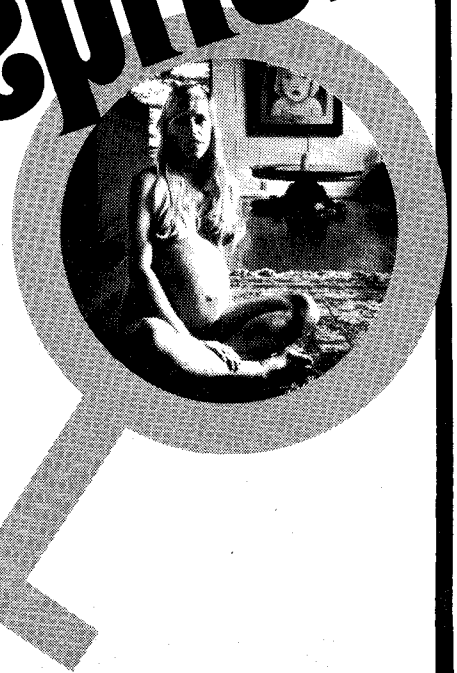

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spiritual life, especially after his late conversion: so strong a case, in fact, that I suspect some of this faith is de Tolnay's at least as much as Michelangelo's—"The divine origin of the human soul becomes manifest . . ."

But there is much, much more to Michelangelo *and* art than this "liberal, humanist, and highly cultured Catholic" is willing to discuss. The book ends as an unbalanced melange of inspirational passages and symbolic readings with miniature samples of his own detailed and devoted research over the years. His ingenious reconstructions of Michelangelo's successive, shrinking everlastingly frustrating projects for Pope Julius' tomb are major contributions. But his own discoveries and attributions are given undue prominence—as is any work that happens to be in his Casa Buonarotti today. Most astonishing of all is his abrupt about-face regarding the two "School of Michelangelo" paintings in London's National Gallery. Without a word of explanation, de Tolnay contradicts a lifetime of assured disagreement with Kenneth Clark, and suddenly accepts them as Michelangelo's.

David Littlejohn

David Littlejohn teaches English at the University of California at Berkeley.

Sense of Place

Pages From a Cold Island by Frederick Exley

(Random House; $7.95)

Frederick Exley's "fictional memoir," *A Fan's Notes*, was published six and a half years ago. It was Exley's first book and, as I noted in a "Reconsideration" of it in these pages last summer, many of Exley's admirers feared it would be his last. For one thing, it did not sell especially well despite generally favorable reviews, and reports from the various bars frequented by Exley indicated that its commercial failure had profoundly depressed him. For another, *A Fan's Notes* is such an intensely self-revealing, self-punitive book that some readers sensed that Exley might have burnt himself out with it.

Or, as Exley puts it in the second chapter of *Pages From a Cold Island:*

> *Because of the autobiographical and confessional character of* A Fan's Notes *. . . I knew from both my later editor and my agent (she told me this to prompt me into proving the experts wrong) that on those very infrequent occasions when my name came up at all I was summarily and disparagingly dismissed as having "shot my wad" (whenever I heard this I breathlessly sought sanctuary and with or without help did a savage job on my penis, afterwards minutely examining the semen for signs of "diminished wad") and I drew perverse gratification from the knowledge of how much comfort my* not *publishing would give to those really peculiar people (whatever else they were interested in, it certainly wasn't writing or books) who fret about such things.*

On the evidence of *Pages From a Cold Island*, the literary obituaries were premature. Exley is back, with no signs of "diminished wad." To be sure, members of the small but ardent *Fan's Notes* cult may be disappointed that he has not simply rewritten his first book, but that is their problem. *Pages From a Cold Island* stands quite confidently on its own, similar to its predecessor in some important and gratifying respects (the rich, raunchy sex; the merciless self-scrutiny; the wild humor and extravagant invention) but in other respects, equally important and gratifying, it is very much its own book.

In *A Fan's Notes*—which Random House has reissued in hardcover ($10) and paper ($4.95)—Exley sought to discover himself by examining his relationship-from-afar with Frank Gifford, the brilliant and brilliantly successful New York Giant running back; as the book unfolds Exley comes to the acknowledgement that he is fated to be a fan rather than a star, and his coming to terms with that fate is the core of the book. In *Pages From a Cold Island*, Exley also places a relationship-from-afar at the core of the book, but here the hero-figure is very different indeed: Edmund Wilson, "perhaps America's last complete man of letters," whose death in the great stone house at Talcottville, New York "an hour's drive south from where I am putting down these words in my own mother's house at Alexandria Bay," provides the impetus for the book.

The subject of *A Fan's Notes* was, in large measure, the kinds and varieties of American success and failure. The subject of *Pages From a Cold Island* is the "literary life," as exemplified by Wilson, as occasionally practiced by Exley himself, and as mocked by the literary personalities of the media fame. Toward the end of the book, talking with a student at the Iowa Writers Workshop, Exley brings it all into focus: "'Your real literary life,' I offered as my one piece of tendentiousness, 'will begin the day you accept the conditions, apartness, confusion, loneliness, work, and *work, and work*—the conditions so many of your peers have already accepted and that Edmund Wilson and his stone house so vividly and hauntingly evoke.'"

It may be true, as Alfred Kazin says in an otherwise monumentally wrong-headed review of *Pages From a Cold Island* for *The New York Times Book Review*, that Exley's appreciation of Wilson's actual writing seems limited to *Memoirs of Hecate County*, but that is scarcely the point. Exley's standing as a critic of Wilson's work is vastly less important than his understanding of the meaning of Wilson's career:

> *I asked the student to accept this from me as a man who understood these things too late, when alcohol, fatuous dreams and disappointed life had all too dearly sapped the youthful ambitions. Wilson's stone house, I said, was a condition of the heart, a willingly imposed isolation from the "literary scene" or anything resembling that scene. If, like Mailer, I said, the student wanted to spend his idle hours running for president or hurling cruelties and spite at his peers or talking about "writing" with little Sir Richard Cavett on the boob tube; or if, like Steinem, he were handsome and striking enough to be introduced on the talk shows as a "writer" without, to my knowledge, having ever written anything, then he wanted something quite else from what I, with all my being, hoped for him. Do what I say, I said, and not what I've done, and I promised my student that, like Edmund Wilson, he would in the end hold up to America a mirrored triptych from which, no matter in which direction America turns, she would—to her dismay, horror, and hopefully even enlightenment—be helpless to free herself from the uncompromising plague of her own image.*

To say that *Pages From a Cold Island* is about the writing life is not to slight the other themes that move through it. It is also concerned with the sense of place in a rootless nation—with Exley's fierce love for and identification with the cold north country to which he is repeatedly drawn. Underneath all the seemingly aimless and self-gratifying sex in which

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Exley indulges (and clinically describes) there is a gradual awareness of the bonds of love, a rejection of "our desperate sexual musical-chairs society." There is some superb journalism, notably a confrontation between Exley and Steinem that is marvelously funny and oddly, surprisingly touching. And always there is the Exley imagination, conjuring up such splendid fantasies as that of the writer of the bombastic editorials in *The New York Daily News:*

Certainly nobody in the Daily News *offices ever saw him. He was an inch over five feet, crabbed, wasted, and he chain-smoked nonfilter cigarettes that left nauseous stains on his fingers. Winter and summer he wore an Army-issue wool khaki greatcoat whose hem brushed his shoe tops, and on awakening each noon he gathered up his ball-points, his yellow lined tablet, his* Thesaurus *and the morning newspapers and went to The Lion's Head on Christopher Street, took a spartan wooden table in the back room and ordered black coffee and two ounces of top-shelf brandy, Hennessey or Martel. After a half-hour of diligently perusing the newspapers, with the aid of his* Thesaurus *he wrote his editorials in fifteen minutes, sent them by messenger to the* Daily News, *and passed the rest of the day pacing himself on imported St. Pauli Girl beer and writing unpublishable poetry about the childhood he'd imagined he'd had in Crosby, S.D., remembering always the afternoon he'd had a single beer with Dylan Thomas in the White Horse Tavern.*

That's the way Exley's mind works. Readers who aren't interested in the workings of his mind probably won't be interested in his books, but what strikes me as singularly impressive in both of them is that he *makes* the reader interested. The true subject of *Pages From a Cold Island* is not Edmund Wilson or Gloria Steinem or Norman Mailer, but Frederick Exley, and he makes Exley matter. He matters, I think, because beneath the sad surface of a life seemingly given over to too much booze and too much random sex and too much aimlessness, there is a true writer, an artist unseduced by fad and fashion, pressing on to the fulfillment of his vision. *Pages From a Cold Island* is real progress toward that goal, the work of a writer we will no longer have to "rediscover."

Jonathan Yardley

Jonathan Yardley is book editor of *The Miami Herald.*

Martin Mayer on Opera

Benvenuto Cellini

Hector Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini,* which received its American premiere in Boston in early May, turns out to be an opera of great verve and sparkle, and only occasional stupidity. It also has a message profoundly believed by its creator—that art conquers all, even booze and professional irresponsibility, if you feel it deeply enough. Of the half-dozen works Sarah Caldwell has introduced to this continent since forming the Opera Company of Boston in 1957, *Cellini* seems to me the most likely to be generally adopted as a repertory piece by both the big-time and the small-time opera performing organizations that are popping up like mushrooms all around the country. Boston's mountainous Missouri-born impresario-conductor-

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director has done us all a considerable favor.

Very freely adapted from Cellini's story in his autobiography about the casting of the Perseus that now stands in the Loggia in Florence, the opera offers one of the best parties ever staged (a Mardi Gras in Rome, including the famous saltarello the composer later included in his *Roman Carnival* overture); a gorgeous and surprisingly moving duet for Cellini and his lady love (also familiar in outline from the overture); strong arias and ariosos for the tenor hero; two first-class waltzes (a drinking chorus for the metal workers and a let's-stay-cheerful number for Cellini's assistant, a mezzo-soprano in trousers); plus a fairly large slice of imitation Rossini (including a few moments of rainstorm, a buffo aria for the interfering father, and the lady love's self-identifying aria, a typical bel-canto production with florid ornamentation and traditional cabaletta).

The great influence here as in most early Berlioz, however, is the music of Carl Maria von Weber, whose *Der Freischutz* (*Robin des Bois* in the mutilated French version) had an impact now impossible to recover because it was later so completely submerged in the Wagnerian tide. Berlioz described the experience of first hearing Weber's opera: "a wood-nymph of ravishing freshness and charm, a creature of instinct and mercurial fancy, naive, gay, pensive, passionate melancholy, whose beauty overwhelmed me with a flood of undiscovered sensations . . . Melody, harmony and rhythm alike are tremendously vivid and powerful; everything combines to arouse the listener."

French music had always been rhythmically more complicated than other music, but the double-dotting that characterizes what Bach and Handel called "the French style" has a rather crabbed, sideways feeling to it. Weber's springing rhythms liberated Berlioz from obedience to the bar line, allowed the French accents to find new forms, and facilitated some of the purest excitement in music. The interpenetration of German and French music—which also gave us Gluck, Meyerbeer and Offenbach, and more recently the much underestimated Frank Martin—is at its most provocative in Berlioz. And some of the rhythms are his alone, or were until well into this century: Caldwell amusedly points out an apparent Stravinsky influence in the three-on-two pattern of one of the arias.

Rhythmic complexity, intricacy of orchestration and difficulty of vocal writing are supposed to make Berlioz hard to perform, but the Bostonians sailed through *Cellini* with a less than wholly professional orchestra and chorus. If Caldwell can conduct it convincingly, moreover, others can, too. With all respect to a great artist, her musicianship as a conductor is in her head more than in her hands: she conducts the way Claudio Arrau plays piano, entirely from the shoulders, with an almost locked wrist and a beat that descends on the downstroke below the level where her players can see the baton. But they know what she wants because she has told them, and they give it to her.

That opera can be staged at all where Caldwell performs it is among the miracles of the age. The Orpheum Theater, across from a corner of the Commons in downtown Boston, was a vaudeville house and movie theater, now used for rock concerts more than for anything else. The total depth of the stage is 26 feet, which means that a champion broad jumper could make it in one leap from the rear wall to the orchestra pit, except that there is no orchestra pit. Half a dozen of the front rows of seats are removed from the hall and a railing erected to separate orchestra from audience for opera performances. Each music stand has two dim lights, one for each side of an opened score, to minimize the total luminescence from in front of the stage.

If anyone in the cast exits on one side of the stage and is supposed to reenter on the other, he goes outside to get around: there is no crossover invisible to the audience within the walls. Choristers and dancers dress in the Wilford Academy, a school building next door, and wait to go on in a dark stairwell beside the boxes to the right of the stage. They wait as much as half an hour before the curtain goes up, too—there is no room for them in the wings, and they can't very well mingle with the ticket-holders.

In an age when transistorized lighting consoles look like the control panel of a jet plane and make possible the presetting of entire acts, the Orpheum uses a strictly manual collection of resistors. (And there is no way to dim the house lights: they snap off like a tropical sunset.) Instead of ranks of motorized drop curtains and flown scenery, Boston can fly only a few light pieces with sandbag counterweights on the other end of the pulley. Sets must be carried in through the auditorium because there is no loading dock (which means everything must be made from small pieces to be bolted together on stage), and once something is on that stage it has to stay there: the art of designing for the Orpheum, practiced almost exclusively by the team of Herbert Senn and Helen Pond, is the construction of movable pieces that look interestingly different according to the facade they display to the public.

Almost all that can be said for the theater is that it is large enough to generate some income. There are about 2800 seats, depending on how many have to be killed for the orchestra; with all seats sold for a three-performance run, Caldwell can cover about a third of her costs. The Orpheum's wide, shallow design also makes singers more comfortable on stage and does, I think, help their voices fill the hall. This element of comfort is more than counterbalanced, however, by an aspect of singing in Boston that handicaps tenors and sopranos: since the Koussevitzky days, the Boston Symphony has tuned to a higher pitch than any other orchestra in the world, and though Caldwell no longer hires many BSO members for her pit she is stuck with the BSO pitch: "You can't find a wind instrument in Boston that plays any other."

What Caldwell can offer singers, then, is a total lack of creature comfort (the dressing rooms are slummy closets without sink or toilet, and must be shared); minimal support from stage magic, prompters or other helpers; the most tiring kind of dramatic rehearsal (she directs her operas herself, and demands acting); and fees no better than

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these singers can earn elsewhere. She has been known to exceed her budget—she has on a number of occasions been able to raise her curtain only by personally securing large contributions the afternoon of a performance, and she has actually had to cancel performances—but even for artists she badly wants she cannot outbid the big European houses or the star-system companies elsewhere in America. Nevertheless her casts are usually no more uneven than casts in other opera houses, and usually there is at least one artist of international standing in a lead role.

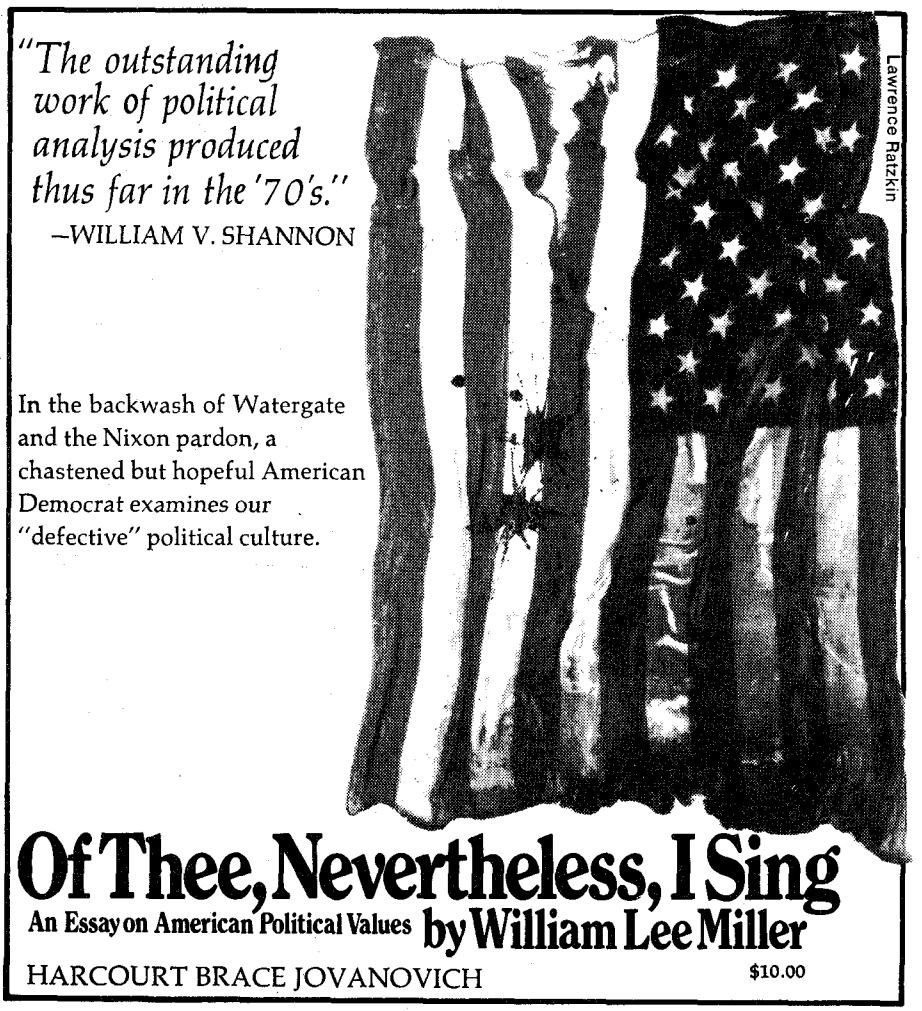
Her *Cellini* featured a fluid performance by John Reardon as the hero's foppish rival, and a sonorous Pope from Donald Gramm (both Caldwell and Gramm were careful to downplay the faintly comic side of the Pope's character as presented by Berlioz: Boston has had enough troubles this year without that one). The special prize, however, was Jon Vickers in the title role. Like several other parts Vickers sings and acts better than anyone else in the world—Florestan in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Benjamin Britten's Peter Grimes, Siegmund in Wagner's *Die Walküre*—Benvenuto Cellini marries brutality, sensitivity and intelligence in a mix highly empathetic to this incomparable and difficult artist.

Caldwell is immensely grateful to Vickers, and should be. He learned the work for her, came early to rehearsals to work out his own business on stage, and during breaks he and Ralph Griffin, the comprimario he kills in the duel in the carnival scene, would go out into the lobby to practice swordplay. People who don't scare easily will long remember his headlong charge up a rickety and bouncing ladder to the top of the forge, to pour metal for his Perseus. "He has ideas of his own," Caldwell says admiringly, "and he can expand on others' ideas—physically, spatially and intellectually." He also produced a sustained high D that gave musical pleasure—at Boston pitch.

Though Caldwell based her performance on the edition of the score prepared for Colin Davis for his successful recording on the Philips label, she took a few clever cuts in the second half, to tighten the action. There are also places where the English lyrics and dialogue have been significantly changed from the French original to make the dramatic situation more palatable or more interesting to modern American tastes. That's fine: the piece underwent a number of major revisions, some by Berlioz himself and some by Liszt, between its first performance and various later revivals in various languages. Others thinking of attempting the opera in the light of the Boston triumph would be well advised to find out what Caldwell did, and do likewise.

Companies that do not have access to singers of the highest capability might also consider transposing the Pope's aria, which goes very low for most basses, and cutting the Rossini-like soprano aria in the first act, which takes more range and agility than Caldwell's heroine could offer (or Davis' on the recording, for that matter). The number does nothing to advance the action, and it is musically somewhat below Berlioz's top drawer. Those changes made, and sufficient rehearsal time allotted to get orchestra and chorus accustomed to the Berlioz rhythms, I should think any reasonably ambitious opera company can handle the piece—provided they can find a Cellini. No one-time observer can trust himself to measure how much of the great pleasure the opera gave in Boston should be attributed to the single overwhelming performance by the man who is, outside the Italian repertory, the leading tenor of the contemporary world.

Caldwell moves on next month to Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (with Beverly Sills), next year to Roger Sessions' *Montezuma*, an American premiere of the largest work ever written by the man most musicians would place with Aaron Copland and Elliott Carter at the top of our musical Pantheon. (It has been done in Berlin, where Caldwell attended rehearsals.) Next season she will make her conducting debut at the Metropolitan Opera, with Verdi's *La Traviata*, starring Sills. She also has plans, incidentally, to build for her company and others a three-theater complex—a baroque theater modeled on Stockholm's Drottingholm, for which the stage machinery could be built in her own shops; a 19th-century opera theater modeled by Bayreuth; and a 20th-century "white box," a large space for multimedia opera where seats and stage and projections and musicians could be placed according to Caldwell's fiery vision of what a piece requires. She said she thought she would have the first of these theaters in operation within two years, and I hastened to congratulate her while she still thought so. But, Lord knows, Boston owes her a theater.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Celluloid Vietnam

by Mitch Tuchman

The allies whipped the Japanese, and World War II was over. American fighters took their discharge papers, their separation pay, and returned to their families. But three buddies, one of them Alan Ladd, held back for one last Asian mission. Their cargo, contraband US dollars; their destination, a place called *Saigon*, a kind of Casablanca East. The French prefect said it all: "Justice at times can be very costly." The year was 1948.

Indochina became Vietnam. It stood at the southern frontier of Chinese communism. The French were gone; they left at the end of *Jump into Hell* (1955). Two years later only a tiny band of American mercenaries, Gene Barry and Nat King Cole among them, remained to keep the *China Gate* barred.

Five more years passed. Again there was *A Yank in Vietnam*, an official military adviser to the Saigon regime, another flyer with another mission, to rescue a South Vietnamese doctor kidnapped by the Reds.

Vietnam meant hell and strange bedfellows to American date-nighters for 20 years: *A Yank in Indochina* (1952), *A Yank in Vietnam* (1962), *The Quiet American* (1958), *The Ugly American* (1963). The films were never more than a monotonous trickle. There was always a civil war seen through American eyes, and the movies were just like other hot and cold war movies, exhortations, macho soapers, "the next best thing to being there." Then even the trickle dried up. In 1965 Hollywood withdrew from Vietnam. The actors were replaced by the United States marines, and the studio camera operators by the network nightly news. The real war didn't look very much like the old movie war. Could the proponents of the new French *cinema vêritê* be far behind? No.

Pierre Schoendorffer, the French war photographer, who was with his countrymen at Dienbienphu, returned to Vietnam in 1965 to tag along with an American combat unit. *Le 317eme Section* was really a transitional film combining *cinema vêritê* with a few professional French actors and a conventional military esthetic. Schoendorffer claims to have been inspired by an apocryphal anecdote told by America's rough and tumble cinema ideologist, Sam Fuller: It was World War II. Fuller was Corporal Fuller, and his superiors were honorable men, the sergeant true-dealing, the young lieutenant high-minded. They were cut off in the Ardennes Wood. The Germans covered their retreat with a steady machine-gun barrage. Their bullets splintered the tree trunks discharging a hail of nasty, snaggle-toothed barbs, making nature herself a weapon of deadly valediction.

Then a lull. The lieutenant moved off to reconnoiter despite the sergeant's admonition that it might be a trap. Time took its own sweet time. It hobbled, it limped, and minutes grew bald. Then two shots cracked so close together they might have been one. That was all.

Corporal Fuller crept forward. He found the dead German straggler. Then he found the lieutenant mortally wounded. His face was ashen, but with every screed of grit left to him he pulled his head up and peered insensibly through glassy eyes and demanded, "Show me the man who killed me."

Schoendorffer and the half dozen European filmmakers who followed him in short order recognized only too well the Americans' predicament: they did not know who they were fighting; they did not know why they were fighting; they did not know if they were winning; and even if they won the battle, they were sure to lose the war.

The network nightly news went right on underscoring the American contribution to the conflict, making us the central characters and the Vietnamese the supporting players. An image was hawked about of an international struggle, a morality play with ideologic symbols dying unimagined deaths. Every US casualty added clout to the conceit. Editorial contrivance ascended. Only one American filmmaker seemed to discern that the war in Vietnam was first of all a Vietnamese struggle for reunification. Emile de Antonio's prophetic masterpiece, *In the Year of the Pig*, was pieced together from stock footage and interviews in 1968. A dead-on history of Vietnam and the war, it was simultaneously an exposition of political and military rhetoric as a special language for concealing crimes and lies. *Pig* was rich in metaphors plucked from the archives, and it analyzed a military tradition disgraced from the time of our first civil war of capitalist expansion (the northern states' economy into the South) to our last.

The antiwar movement was gaining strength, but John Wayne jumped the gun on the protestors. *The Green Berets* was the first film to be all about it. It was less a war movie than an anti-antiwar movie. Inaccurate on the fine points like PRG generals keeping jungle rendezvous in Citroens, at least it contained a single composition of pellucid insight: a 6'5" Wayne charging a bunker surrounded by his 5'2" allies.

When Hollywood quit Vietnam, the doves replaced the hawks on the screen. Independent documentarians (without distribution) prevailed, and their films embodied that ambiguous French philosophical sense of Winners and Losers. Although they were in opposition to the US government's position on hostilities in Vietnam, they shared Eric Sevareid's penchant for seeing the devastation of that country as a metaphor for corruption and dissension in this one. For them the war was an American moral dilemma. Stripped of romance, stripped of a storylike beginning and middle, stripped of everything but the punch line, it was Fuller's story of the perplexed and dying soldier. The documentaries were suspiciously like the old war movies with the good and evil roles reversed. That is why the hero of *Hearts and Minds*, for instance, is Daniel Ellsberg, the man who did most to expose that dilemma. The war in Vietnam was conveniently reduced to a symbol of our decadence.

They produced mainly two kinds of documentaries: the visit to Vietnam and the antiwar testimonial. The testimonials brought the war home and gave veterans, students and dissident politicians a voice. But the producer giveth and the editor taketh away, and a film like *Interviews with My Lai Veterans*, for example, used the statements of men who knew firsthand to express the sentiments of the men who guessed—and decreed.

A curious aspect of the visit-to-Vietnam films was that given practically identical visual material, such markedly different films emerged. On their guided tours, the filmmakers were shown the same SAM missile launchers, the devastated Bach Mai Hospital, the crater-pocked Highway One, the cot-

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tage industries where American jets became Vietnamese bicycles, the textile mill at Hanoi, the children's calisthenics classes.

People's War, Robert Kramer's 1969 visit to the North, is dated as a travelog, but its rigid dialectical explanation of the concept of a people's war is itself a lasting memorial to the way American radicals were thinking at the end of the '60s.

In this period only two documentaries, both made outside Hollywood, supported the US government's position: Dino de Laurentiis' *Vietnam: A War Without Battlefronts and Vietnam! Vietnam!*, a United States Information Agency film directed by Sherman Beck and "supervised" by John Ford. Neither has been shown in the USA.

While the partisan cinema struggled with its campus screenings and catch-as-catch-can distribution, the Hollywood industry faltered outright. Studio executives were willing to go with anything. They had been persuaded that concerned young filmmakers could attract concerned young audiences. Yet contrarily they had remained confident that Americans would not abandon their TV sets to plunk down three dollars for a searing reflection of hard times. Abecedarians passed the studio gates charged with making "relevant pictures," and with them came a fleeting, stateside vision of Vietnam influenced perhaps by the documentaries, more likely by the nightly news. It resembled the news in content: the war in Vietnam was America's war; and in structure: the war in Vietnam was one discrete issue, as racism was a discrete issue, and pollution was a discrete issue, and gun control.

Medium Cool and *Alex in Wonderland*, released back to back, are practically identical. One is about a frustrated news cameraman who creates little documentaries about each problem; the other about a frustrated director who creates not so little fantasies about each problem. *Alice's Restaurant*, *Greetings*, *Homer* and *Windflowers* are all by and about liberals who saw Vietnam as just one more problem for Americans. Their box office failure was a pyrrhic victory for front-office doubt. When *The Activist* flopped, as did all these pictures, its author, Jo Napoleon, averred she was "through with kid politics."

Each studio faced the question of whether to do Vietnam pictures. In 1968 the head of production at every studio told Stirling Siliphant that by the time his Vietnam screenplay, *Groundswell*, could be shot and released the war would be over and no one would care about it any more. Bill Bushnell received letters in 1971 regarding *The Prisoners*, his torture and interrogation script: MGM said you're five years too early, and Warners, the very next day, said you're five years too late.

James Fisher, the story editor at Fox, wrote him: "As I have told you, this is definitely not our teaspoonful of heroin. If we choose to go the Vietnam route, we already have under consideration a screenplay in which we are vitally interested." (That was *Welcome Home, Soldier Boys*, which Fox made but barely released.) And Danny Selznick at Universal wrote: "As I told you on the phone, I think it's very timely and powerful, although I'm just not sure who would put down three dollars to see it. On the other hand, I don't think any of us knows what works and what doesn't in this fickle market, and you may indeed have a sleeper on your hands. For your sake, I sure hope so." Bill Bushnell's film will be released this year. He made it on a privately raised budget of $65,000.

But there was one remnant, one castoff, one sprue of the war that fit every production schedule. The returning veteran was the perfect '70s protagonist. Guerrilla warfare training had made him tougher than tough. He was sure one violent son-of-bitch in a season when violent sons-of-bitches were just the limit. He'd been to the other side of the mountain where a man's natural impulses brooked no restraint. We'd sent him out a man and brought him back a savage. *No Vietnamese Ever Called (Him) Nigger*, and now he was home. His frustration, his compassion, his confusion, his repression suited him for every genre. He was avenger, judge, square peg and psycho. He went berserk. He was *Billy Jerk* and *Slaughter*, *Norwood*, *Captain Milkshake*, *Jud* and *The Angry Breed*. (To the documentarians he was *Wintersoldier* and *Different Sons*.) He was *Walking Tall*, a shot-for-shot remake by Phil Karlson of his own *Phoenix City Story*. *The Best Years of Our Lives*—phooey! The veterans of the last war were the reception committee for this one, and if the new veteran didn't care for the tenor of the town, he leveled it as he did in *Welcome Home, Soldier Boys*.

Hollywood and the independent filmmakers were now traveling substantially the same route. They were marketing an American war; they were featuring a veteran who was both outcast and

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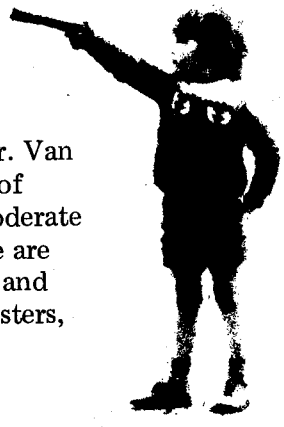

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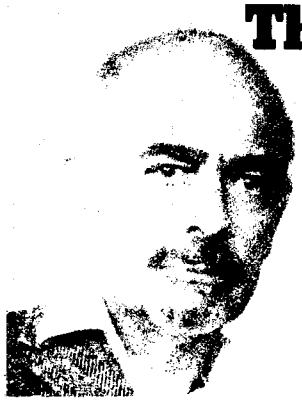

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Edited by W. Eric Gustafson

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archon. Ultimately Hollywood, the more omnivorous system of the two, would have to bring it all together, to annex the independent esthetic to the commonly held themes. Behold! *Hearts and Minds*, all the disillusioned vanity of chauvinists and the collage of *In the Year of the Pig*. A producer who'd survived the "youth" crusade; a director whose documentary on the electronic battlefield in Vietnam had just been cancelled by CBS; the editor who'd assembled de Antonio's footage. It could not have been more perfect, more shallow, more cynical, more sentimental, more condescending, more evasive. Its irony was ridicule; its manipulation without purpose; useless guilt, no good to you, no good to the Vietnamese; and lingering suspicion is that the director, Peter Davis, knows neither this country nor Vietnam or why we fought or why they resisted. *Hearts and Minds* is notable only because it is the Vietnam picture to end all Vietnam pictures. It was embroiled in scandal. Earnestly promoted by its producer, Bert Schneider (from banal breach of contract to hysterical cries of political suppression) it will be a barometer for every studio on the Coast of the nation's continuing awareness of and interest in Vietnam. If it fails at the box office, which it appears to be doing, no new money will ever be advanced for a theatrical release about the war.

More's the pity, since Fuller's got a sensational notion for a film on Ho Chi Minh: you know, the story of the immigrant cook and bottle washer who grows up to be President.

Mitch Tuchman writes from Los Angeles about the politics of the film industry.

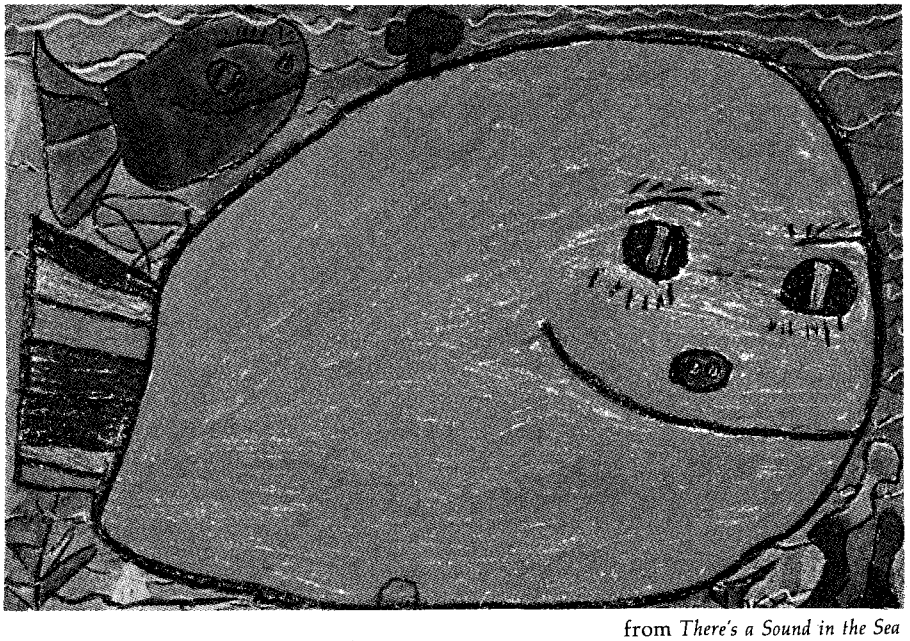
Fine Print

The Natural World

Doris Grumbach

There is a small but steady stream of books about animals, fish, whales, zoos, etc., that tend to get lost in the more attention-getting seas of fiction, of fear-striking, end-of-the-world ecological studies, retrospective muckraking books on politics, and even Dracula-Sherlock Holmes-Frankenstein re-creations. I have read about a dozen natural-world books during the last months, and want to call the best of them to your attention.

Gathering of Animals by William Bridges, once the curator of publications of the New York Zoological Society, is about, as you might well expect, the Bronx Zoo, with interesting material about other activities of the society, like the New York Aquarium, thrown in. Bridges is more a man of prodigious memory and ability to organize facts than a writer. But one does not look for style in a book of this sort but for anecdote and accurate history; there is plenty of that here. From the stories surrounding Teddy Roosevelt, Madison Grant, famed William Temple Hornaday and Prof. Fairfield Osborn, all associated with the Zoological Society in its early years, to the modernized zoo, with its aerial tramway, its newly arranged exhibits, its farm-in-the-zoo of recent years, its greatly expanded research activities, the NY Zoological Society has been a leader in every aspect of animal display, conservation and education. This history is both instructive, entertaining, if you are a zoo enthusiast, and the old photographs are especially fun to look at (Harper & Row; $12.50).



from *There's a Sound in the Sea*

Among the Elephants is one of the those books-about-nature designed both to tear your heart and stir you to some kind of activity in behalf of its subject. A young Scottish zoologist, Iain Douglas-Hamilton (collaborating with his wife Oria who took many of the pictures) has written a superb account of the elephants of East Africa. Douglas-Hamilton went to Tanzania for the Royal Society to find out what he could about the dying breed of elephants. He seems to have learned an enormous amount, learned as well to love those "lovely animals," became aware that their social behavior is not unlike that of human beings. The problems their survival as a species poses are formidable, but the authors believe they can be solved by the people of Africa for whom these great beasts are a part of their natural, cultural heritage and environment. The photographs greatly enhance the text. Some are beautiful, some full of tragic evidence about the losses, dangers, enemies of animal life. An engrossing, well written account (Viking; $14.95).

It is hard to imagine anyone could become fond of coyotes, and what is even harder, could write so well about them that the resisting reader becomes fond of them too: but so it happens in this book. **God's Dog,** by Hope Ryden (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan; $12.50) does for coyotes what Sally Carrighar has done for the blue whale and Douglas-Hamilton did for elephants: made them seem almost lovable. She dispels the myths about their vicious nature, showing through her intense first-hand observation that coyotes never attack live animals and indeed serve a necessary and useful natural purpose by eating carrion. She cares about these "misunderstood animals." Her photographs are so good that we share her concern for the possible future extirpation of what the Navajos called God's dog, because of poison bait, leg-hold traps and human bounty hunters, the use of the deadly "1080" compound, a chemical toxicant devised to kill a predatory mammal (now forbidden on federal lands).

The blue whale is a truly lovely creature;

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in Sally Carrighar's book, **The Twilight Seas,** beautifully illustrated with pen-and-ink drawings by Peter Parnell, and published in a handsomely produced volume by Weybright and Talley ($9.95), he is both lovely and intelligent, more intelligent than avaricious man who has killed off all but about 1000 of these "shy, reticent creatures." Truman M. Talley, the publisher, cared so much about the fate of the threatened blue whales (and, of course, his book) that he wrote to tell me that this thousand represents "a remnant [that is] being rapidly diminished each whaling season in Antarctica by the helicopters and factory ships of the Japanese and the Russians, the last two whaling fleets in the world. . . ."

The Twilight Seas allows us to live through the life cycle of blue whales, and to accompany them on their 10,000-mile journey to their death by harpoon from men in a whaleboat. The final triumph is, however, the whale's: having rammed the boat with his head as a last, moribund act, he sinks to the bottom: "They [fishermen] lost the female as well, for by then she was too far under the surface. The whale and his mate sank together into the twilight depths of the welcoming sea." A lover of the natural world will relish this re-creation of life in the sea among intelligent, familial and loving mammals. A feast of whales, one to be commended to the land-locked adventurer.

There is another book about whales, this one a compilation of drawings and poems sent to Tamar Griggs who teaches in the public schools in Western Canada. Scrimshaw Press ($10.95) has put these all together in what can only be described as a remarkable display of talent from children of elementary school age, wonderful drawings, paintings and verse selected from 15,000 contributions. "A Child's-Eye View of the Whale," as **There's a Sound in the Sea** is subtitled, is a fresh and cheerful one, on the whole, contrasting with the children's awareness of the danger the species is in. Writes Andrew Soros, age six:

Whales are mammals. I am a mammal.
We hunt whales. We kill our nature.

Another contributor wrote to collector Griggs: "I hear your making a book about whales. I *bet* it is going to be good. I know it is. Because if anyone *cares* about whales alot, and is going to write a book, the book might as well be good." It *is* very good.

Theo W. Brown watched a friend, a 13-year-old Australian boy, attacked by sharks, his leg torn away above the knee while he was diving in 18 feet of water not far from the shore. Brown decided to find out what could be done to prevent such tragedies recurring. **Sharks: The Silent Savages** (Little, Brown; $7.95) is a record of the young Australian scuba diver's "struggle to develop a fail-safe shark deterrent," a search not yet ended, except that the writer-diver now believes that the sonic approach to shark repellents is the one most certain to solve the problem of the silent, gray, shadowy and lethal fish.

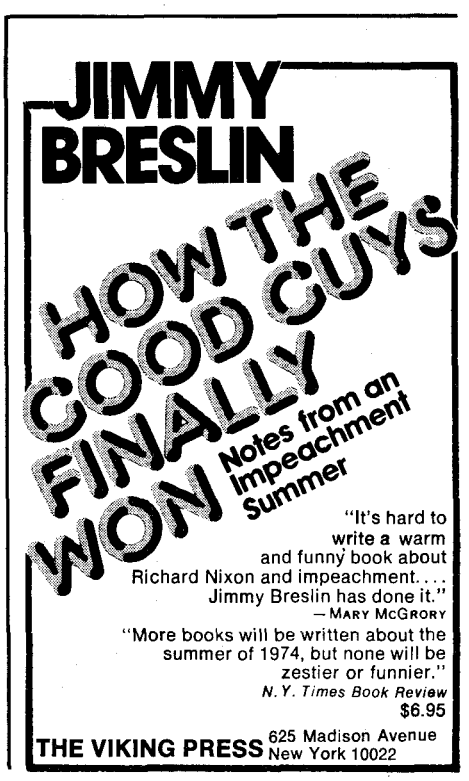
The Year of the Butterfly, by George Ordish (Scribner's; $8.95) is an intriguing book, a carefully kept record of the life histories of two monarch butterflies. They begin their lives as thousandth-of-an-ounce caterpillars in a patch of milkweed plants near Glens Falls, New York. The author gave them the names Pliable for the female, and Timorous for the male, marked them and then followed their incredible odyssey during six months until their death far from Glens Falls. It is known that they went as far as Lake Champayan in Mexico and then back to Myrtle Beach. If you know and like Victor Scheffer's **The Year of the Whale** (in which he was dealing with a whale calf weighing a ton at birth) you will enjoy this pilgrim's progress, a book that comes to mind because the author has named his two protagonists and other "characters" after Bunyan characters. Very exciting and instructive stuff.

To Robert Lowell, on History

I once went an hour early to your skyscraper classroom. There,
my fear of death seemed grand and bearable; your large head
was all thought, hung, almost exploding, over emptiness,
as your voice hung, over the cold fire of brick
steeples catching the late light, among concrete hills,
Landor's *Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil*
Hide all the peopled hills you see . . .
Your head has blown up since then, and dusted the world,
and my fears, too, come back in chalky fragments.
Your book is the sadness of grade-school afternoons
squared off in the same hard-blue and dust-red, the blood
sinking into the plains of our long journey;
and the sadness of checking the locks on all the windows
at night, seeing the ghost of a plant peer through.

Alan Williamson

Alan Williamson is assistant professor of English at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville.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Correspondence

Mutual Admiration Society

To the editors:

As I was reading Colman McCarthy's review of *Here at The New Yorker* by Brendan Gill and *Thurber* by Burton Bernstein (*TNR*, March 8), it occurred to me that during its lifetime of 50 years no one has laid a glove on *The New Yorker*. I attribute this largely to the incestuous habit of the magazine's staff writing books about each other: Thurber, a *New Yorker* author, writes a book on Harold Ross, the first *New Yorker* editor; Burton Bernstein, another member of the stable, in turn writes a book on Thurber. Meanwhile Brendan Gill, on the staff of the magazine for 40 years, comes out with a supposedly definititive history; and, no doubt, after Gill's departure John Updike will come up with a biography of Gill. And so on, *ad mauseum*. Unfortunately reviewers tend to fall into this mutual admiration syndrom and perpetuate the cycle.

Something for media watchers to consider is how *The New Yorker* has managed to fend off its critics for over half a century. Could it be some obsession with the territorial imperative? For example, in the early '60s when I was collecting material for an anthology of parody, I politely requested permission from the magazine to use some pieces by Wolcott Gibbs, Thurber, DeVries, *et al* and I was greeted with nothing but nastiness and paranoia. The editors refused me a handful of selections because they were terrified at the prospect of my collection becoming a "*New Yorker* book." I didn't mind being turned down, but the manner in which it was done—and I have an extensive correspondence on the subject—defies description.

The famous Tom Wolfe hatchet job on editor William Shawn, which appeared in *New York* magazine, is another classic example of neurotic overraction and paranoiac insulation on the part of *New Yorker* people. Normally they let outsiders into their *sanctum sanctorum* only if they are sympathetic. With Wolfe they made a mistake. He demolished Shawn and the reaction was shattering. J. D. Salinger came out of hiding and other *New Yorker* writers went to bat for Shawn and the magazine with a zealousness resembling defenders of Mother Church against heretics. Of course Wolfe's profile was malicious and in the worst possible taste; still one could understand the impulse that prompted him to go overboard. After receiving all the flak, he must have said to himself, "Yup, those guys really defend their territory."

What no one has noted on the 50th birthday of Eustace Tilley is that Harold Ross' brainchild has become an institution like Bob Hope, Walter Cronkite and *Citizen Kane* and that is *bad*. No magazine should become an institution. When it does and when its editor states that he strives to make every issue a work of art, people tend to think that every issue is a work of art. At the risk of sounding like a cynic, I would argue the contrary and would say that a tough critical look, from someone not in any way connected with *The New Yorker*, at what Eustace Tilley is up to is long overdue. Incest and the territorial imperative must be wiped out on West 43rd Street.

Burling Lowrey
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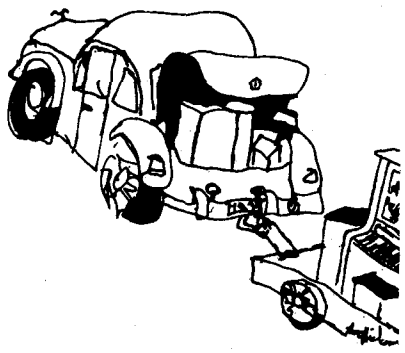

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Bad Jokes

To the editors:

The caricatures of the Arabs in the issue of March 15 are as offensive to me as the similar images used by anti-Semites to depict Jews. You know—or should know—that these are not typical Semite features (if there is a "typical") and should be ashamed of yourself for permitting the cartoon to appear in *The New Republic.*

Milton Aronson
Pleasantville, NY

Legal Specialization

To the editors:

The critique by Robert Stuart Nathan and Norma Levy (*TNR*, April 26) on "Specializing the Law," is excellent.

It is human to want to protect oneself from the rigors of competition. If one can claim the tag of "specialist" it becomes easier to be complacent, to use old thinking, old forms, over and over again.

The law has been relatively free from special classifications that limit competition. The young, hungry, idealistic lawyer is death on the complacent lawyer. The threat of an active, intelligent opponent at the bar is more effective than all the specialized classifications in making lawyers do their best work.

The best a lawyer has to offer is not his speciality but his ability to cross many lines of intellectual discipline. His work must be whatever is necessary to do a job for his client. Almost never does such a job lie exclusively within a "specialty." The true specialist is not a lawyer, but a clerk. If his client needs several specialists to represent him in a legal problem, the client becomes, in effect, his own lawyer.

Large law firms are well represented on the committees of bar associations. Any legislation requiring specialization in law will favor the large firms, because only they will be able to give "full service" to the client. It will be tough on the opposing litigant if he cannot afford the whole panoply of specialized professionals to see his case through.

The large law firms traditionally pay the best salaries to law graduates; but recently the best law graduates have been opting for work that enables them to see the whole picture, to cross lines of discipline, and to enter into new fields of

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work. The bright law graduate nowadays seldom asks what the chances are for specialization; he asks what the chances are for a variety of interesting work. Much of the resurgence of interest in legal education is based upon the desire of students to find a profession that will enable them to see, and work with, the broader picture.

Stephen Zetterberg
Claremont, California

Illegal Migration

To the editors:

i believe Michael Piore goes too far ("The Illegals," *TNR*, Feb. 22) when he draws a scenario of return to sweatshop days if employers are prohibited from hiring illegal aliens. But his proposed solution of ". . . an effort to regulate a process that has become irresistible," falls on the demographics of illegal migration.

Consider the population situation in one major source country, Mexico: current population 56 million, annual growth rate 3.3 percent, which gives a doubling time for the population of 21 years, and a natural increase (births minus deaths) of 1.8 million yearly, which can be measured against a natural increase in the United States of 1.2 million yearly on a population base four times as large. Forty-six percent of Mexico's population is under 15 years of age, poised to enter a job market in which the unemployment/underemployment rate is already on the order of 40 percent.

This same picture exists throughout Latin America, which has a population of 300 million, an overall growth rate of 2.9 percent, and a doubling time of 25 years.

What Mr. Piore is asking for in an "effort to regulate" this process is a new Bracero-type program. Aside from the ethics of living off the sweat of such disadvantaged persons, there is no conceivable way we can accommodate the millions that will be seeking jobs.

Over the next few decades, illegal migration will present the developed countries of the world with one of their most difficult problems. The solution will be difficult, but it calls for a judicious blend of foreign aid to help alleviate the poverty of the less developed countries through economic development and birth control, restrictions on the employment of illegal aliens, and increased surveillance of the borders.

John H. Tanton, MD
Chairman
Immigration Study Committee
Zero Population Growth

Kauffmann, *from page 20*

ness, which I too find disarming to a degree. My plaint is that when his work takes me, I feel, as with much avant-garde work, that I have seen a live nerve extracted from a body and laid on a lab table. Much of what Wilson was doing with language in *Victoria* was overshadowed for me by Peter Handke's plays. (I doubt very much that Wilson was "using" Handke, by the way.) Handke's inquiry into the relation of language to chaos and order, to purity of feeling, is *included* in his organic plays that are full bodies of theatrical experience. My difficulty with *Value* is Antonioni: his stock exchange sequences in *Eclipse*, including the one-minute silence for a deceased broker, gave me much more of the maniacal ballet of money-chasing, of the pathos of greed, than Wilson could approach. (Again I doubt that this film was a specific influence.) And Antonioni gave it to me as part of a large, beaufitul, humanist work into which those anti-human sequences fed.

A major impulse of this century's art has been toward literal and figurative abstraction, as hundreds of painters and writers testify. They have tried to pluck out and present in isolation the states of feeling that more traditional artists have arrived at through complicated design, through implication. Sometimes the result is wonderful. In *Endgame*, for instance, Beckett abstracts at once and dramatically crystallizes a state more or less equivalent to what Uncle Vanya reaches at the end of a long and complex "story" play. Beckett's journey through and around this state of being is so exquisite and profoundly articulate that it is something more than satisfying. But with lesser abstractions, like Wilson's, after the first shock of impact, I think, "Well, what next? What is he going to do with it? When X or Y or Z presented that feeling or view in his painting or play or novel, he did it en route, it was part of something. What are we en route to here?" Usually, in an organic sense, very little, or nothing. We get just a gallery of abstracted feelings, some more effective than others.

Can Wilson continue to produce theater pictures, independent of large organizing form, sufficiently striking to keep him generally interesting? That's the chief question—the fountain flow. Will the compliments that he implicitly pays the cultivated, the convention-wearied, inflate their estimate of him? That's a question too, and, for the health of contemporary judgment, almost equally important.

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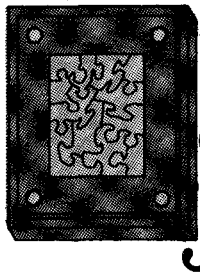

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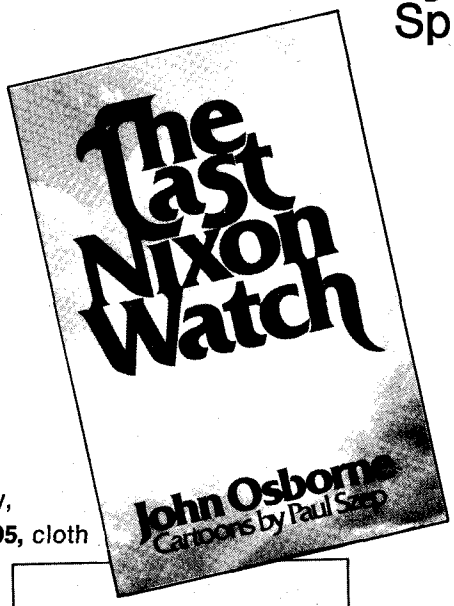

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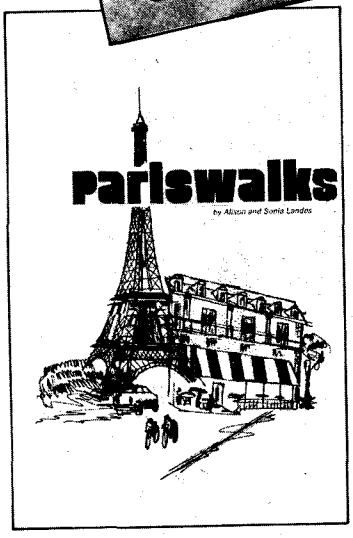

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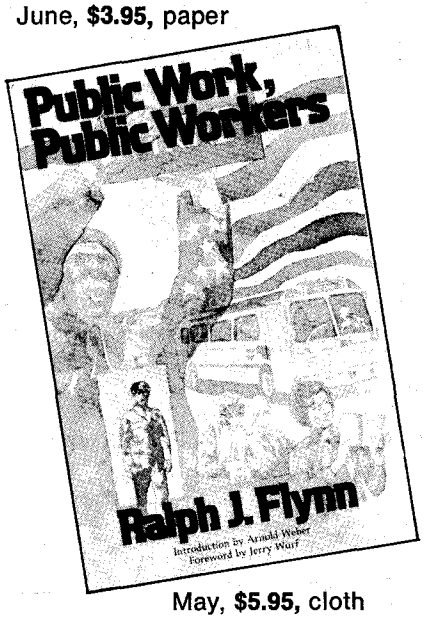

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Ralph J. Flynn, a onetime schoolteacher, now Associate Executive Secretary of the California Teachers Association, has worked for the Connecticut Education Association and the San Francisco Classroom Teachers Association. He was executive director of the Coalition of American Public Employees from its founding in 1972 until 1974.

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